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ABSTRACT

The papers for this proceeding reveal a variety of techniques and ideas for enhancing reading through literature. Lyman C. Hunt in "Literature and Learning to Read" discusses beginning reading instruction and some mistakes teachers commonly make, and reminds teachers that the primary objective should be to encourage reading and help the student realize self-improvement. Jean B. Sanders in "Black Literature for Children and Adolescents" encourages the use of good juvenile books with black characters. Elizabeth Weller in "To Each His Own Book" urges teachers to help children find reading materials based on their own choice and taste. Patricia M. Brown in "From Games to Books" discusses the use of reading games designed to help children overcome their reading problems. Francis I. Williams in "Uptight: Competition Time" discusses how to help students become "book-curious." Louise P. Clark in "How Rich Is Their Reading?" discusses the art of critical reading. Bernice J. Mayhew in "Book Making for Budding Authors" describes in detail how children can publish their own books. Finally, Harriet W. Ehrlich in "Creative Dramatics in the Language Arts Curriculum" suggests the establishment of an atmosphere that nurtures creativity and imaginative thinking. (HS)

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Proceedings

of the

1972

Second Annual

Reading Conference

June 21-22

LITERATURE AND LEARNING TO READ

CS 000 061

CURRICULUM RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,

INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

TERRE HAUTE

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THE CURRICULUM RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

School of Education, Indiana State University

The Curriculum Research and Development Center of Indiana State University provides school systems the opportunity to secure aid, encouragement, and cooperation in curriculum development projects. It coordinates the participation of University personnel engaged in curriculum work, provides information concerning curriculum development, and initiates and sponsors curriculum research projects. It is the contact point where public schools initiate inquiries regarding curriculum and acts as a vehicle for communication between elementary and secondary schools and the University. Although the CRDC operates as an agency of the School of Education, it represents all departments of the University engaged in curriculum development projects.

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Printed Materials—The Center produces courses of study, bibliographies, and similar materials.

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David T. Turney
Dean, School of Education

Charles D. Hopkins
Director

FOREWORD

This second annual Conference on the teaching of Reading and Language Arts is an interdepartmental effort of Indiana State University. Members of the Department of English, Library Science, Elementary Education and the Laboratory School have cooperated to make this conference as fine an effort as we can put together on the theme Literature and Learning to Read.

It is the hope of those making presentations at this conference that what has been presented and discussed will help to improve the teaching of reading by teachers and contribute to the enjoyment of it by children.

A great measure of appreciation is due Dr. David Waterman and Dr. Vanita Gibbs for their vigorous and untiring efforts to bring people with a reading message together for this conference. The ultimate value of this conference lies in the implementation of ide[illegible] and attitudes gained by the participants at this conference. From these proceedings it is evident that boys and girls will gain a great deal from what happened at this conference.

William G. McCarthy
Chairman, Department of
Elementary Education

PREFACE

"Literature and Learning to Read," the theme of the Second Annual Reading Conference, was an extension of the 1971 conference with additional emphasis on literature as a basis for experiences in learning to read. Acceptance of the first conference was so enthusiastic that continuance was purposefully scheduled to coincide with the annual summer reading workshop in the Department of Elementary Education.

The keynote speakers were from fields directly related to literature and reading. Dr. Lyman Hunt has contributed significantly to classroom techniques for individualizing reading, and Mrs. Harriet Ehrlich has established a staff development program in the Philadelphia public schools to promote creative dramatics as a basis for children's thinking and learning. The conference attendance overflowed the auditorium for both of these speakers.

The papers reproduced for this proceedings reveal a variety of techniques and ideas for enhancing reading through the delightful medium of literature. The presentations were made by persons from various backgrounds: library science, Laboratory School, corrective reading, English and elementary education.

As co-chairmen of the conference we wish to express our appreciation to the staff of the Department of Elementary Education for their assistance and encouragement in making the Second Annual Reading Conference a reality.

Vanita Gibbs
David C. Waterman

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LITERATURE AND
LEARNING TO READ

P R O G R A M OF
SECOND ANNUAL READING CONFERENCE

THURSDAY, a.m., June 15, 1972,

9:30-11:00 - Holmstedt Hall, Room 103

Opening Remarks: William G. McCarthy, Chairman
Department of Elementary Education
Indiana State University

Welcome: Harriet D. Darrow, Dean
Summer Sessions and Academic Services
Indiana State University

Introduction of Speaker:
David C. Waterman
Co-chairman

Speaker: Lyman C. Hunt
University of Vermont

"Literature and Learning to Read"

THURSDAY, p.m., June 15, 1972,

1:30-2:20

Room 21 - Holmstedt Hall
Jean B. Sanders
"Black Literature for Children and Adolescents"

Room 120 - Holmstedt Hall
Elizabeth Weller
"To Each His Own Book!"

Room 205 - Laboratory School
Patricia M. Brown
"From Games to Books"

2:30-3:20

Room 21 - Holmstedt Hall
Frances I. Williams
"UPTIGHT: Competition Time"

Room 120 - Holmstedt Hall
Louise P. Clark
"How Rich is Their Reading?"

Room 116 - Holmstedt Hall
Bernice J. Mayhew
"Book Making for Budding Authors"

FRIDAY, June 16, 1972,

9:30-11:00 - Holmstedt Hall, Room 103

Introduction of Speaker:
Vanita Gibbs
Co-chairman

Speaker: Harriet W. Ehrlich
"Creative Dramatics in the Language Arts Curriculum"

LITERATURE AND LEARNING TO READ

Lyman C. Hunt

The field of reading is an extremely exciting part of the educational world. It is characterized by tremendous interest, vitality, concern, and urgency. I am going to take liberties with the title of Literature and Learning to Read, using it in its broadest sense. Thus I want to go beyond the confines of any particular set of materials or techniques that might be considered in this topic. Probably the most exciting trend in the teaching of reading is the one that encourages youngsters to move out from a single set of materials or a single restrictive progression of skills into the broad world of books and literature.

In this instance a book is defined as simply a way to package ideas. As far as print is concerned there are all kinds of packages, ranging from the attractive paperbacks to hardbacks to boxes. We are also living in a world where many ideas are packaged in non-print form. There are audio-visual components. But I would like to address you this morning with the concept that in teaching reading, we are searching for ways to help youngsters learn how to go along on their own. We want them to become independent, become self-directing and self-propelling in the world of ideas, not only between the covers of books but in magazines, newspapers, and in every form of print. I would establish myself as using the term "literature" in the broadest sense possible.

The task of the reading teacher is to help the youngster learn how to explore the world of ideas, whether they are in printed form or not, and to learn how to command his own course, to direct himself, to make determinations, decisions, evaluations and judgments about the value of these ideas contained within these materials for himself. I will not argue the relative value of print and non-print materials. But I do feel print is a vital, viable medium which will be around for a long time.

My initiation into the field of reading was very exciting. In the early 1950's, when I first taught at The Pennsylvania State University, I met a most remarkable first grade teacher. She felt strongly about the confines and restrictions of basal readers, yet at that time a teacher was expected to take all her first grade youngsters through the scope and sequence of the adopted basal textbook. Miss Dilling was impatient with these requirements. She felt that her able youngsters were not being sufficiently challenged. These able students were not learning to direct themselves through the world of ideas in books as she wanted them to do. In addition she felt that her low-powered readers were being hindered because they could not move at the pace demanded by the lessons in the manual. In general, none of them could get breadth of experience; nor could they use their own interests and motivations as vehicles for becoming involved in the world of print.

Because of the system, the establishment governing reading instruction then as now, she felt that she had to pace her three groups through the text materials according to the prescribed sequence and arrangement in which they were placed in the basal program. But she wanted to break out of it and she did. I watched her. From Miss Dilling I began to learn the true meaning and inherent worth of a personalized, individualized reading program. She moved away from the basal text program, by using the widest variety of materials she could acquire at that time. The world of publishing has changed in the last twenty years, and if she were to do this today it would be far easier for her. But there were enough materials then for her to launch individualized reading. She used trade books, paperbacks, and whatever else she could find.

In essence, then, she began a program where the youngsters had as much material available to them as she could assemble, and where they were responsible for selecting their reading materials for themselves. They moved themselves through the material at a pace that was compatible with their abilities and motivation. Yet responsibility in terms of reading performance was present. She set up a system of checks and balances to guarantee that the freedoms were not abused. She used conferences, activities, records, and all kinds of methods or devices to help those youngsters read in a responsible, productive fashion.

All through the fifties I watched the development of these ideas basic to individualized reading. In fact, our classes were a kind of clearing house through which these ideas were transmitted to other teachers, who in turn carried them to other levels and other grades. Soon other forms and other variations developed. These were exciting educational advances in the field of reading.

A curious thing had developed by the late sixties. The thrust and energy of the educational world in this country began moving more toward individual patterns of learning and education. Significantly, we began to see two forms of individualization develop. Today you may note that individualization has two distinct forms and the effort is moving in two rather diverse directions. In fact, the situation in terms of individualization is beginning to be terribly blurred and indistinct. For many educators it is highly confusing. A distinction between the two forms is vital if one is to understand the controversies surrounding the improvement of reading instruction. Two terms define the different paths or different tracks that are being given to the concept of individualization. One may be termed prescriptive. You may know it as Individually Prescribed Instruction. The other I will call personal or personalized individual instruction.

It's necessary to clarify some differentiating characteristics between the two forms of individualizations. Two pictures should help. [First slide shows a boy walking down a set of railroad tracks.] Now there are certain characteristics of Individually Prescribed Instruction symbolized by this picture. You have here a picture of a little boy, rather disheveled in his appearance, and obviously unhappy. You can

take this youngster back along that track a little bit and you can imagine him getting onto the ties to walk them step-by-step, until he gets to a certain designated point.

Personal individualized instruction, on the other hand, is not characterized by placing (or determining) the point at which a youngster starts along a well-marked, evenly paced step-like program. In this picture, the disconsolate lad is taking the evenly sequenced steps in turn. In prescriptive programs the pupil may miss one of the steps and receive a signal to go back and relearn before going on to a certain point. In this case, individualization is in pacing only. The difference here is that each individual is covering the same educational territory. All go along the same path in the same direction. The basic aspect of individualization is an individual rate of accomplishment of the prescribed material. To avoid oversimplification of the concept, many prescribed programs may have a two or three tracked plan. Thus there may be different programmed materials or different sequences built into materials for different groups. But the educational objective remains to accomplish the prescribed material in a step-by-step, highly sequenced, orderly fashion.

The next picture contrasts with the previous picture's basic structure. Basic to this one is a conceptual design of individualization in a personal sense. [Slide projected shows a spider in his web.] This design is multi-directional. It indicates the searching out, the branching out, the reaching out into the world of educational ideas, that is the concept of exploratory education. It may also represent the materials to be used or the variety of directions an individual may make in his own learning. Note the core or center. In interpreting this, we can call the core basic word recognition, for example. Once the core is acquired, the youngster has the potential for moving not only in radial directions from the center circle, but also laterally around the circle. The idea of reinforcement is present. The implication is twofold: one is of moving out in a variety of directions; the second is of reinforcing in a lateral sense. Thus in personal individualized work you not only have the element of self pacing, of moving oneself at a predetermined or self-determined rate, but you also have the element of directionality. Thus there is a tremendous difference between prescribed and personal forms of individual education.

This personal form may sound very simple. When you have all kinds of books and printed materials, then let youngsters choose for themselves. Following this they may read them on their own and pace themselves, moving themselves through print and then, through a variety of means including conferences, activities, records, all kinds of apparatus, demonstrate productive reading.

Turning to the issue of structure, as it relates to our two slides, we usually describe prescribed programs as being highly structured. Many professionals hold that individual reading or personal reading is un-structured. This is a false concept. If a teacher does not have structure

in her mind, she cannot make the personalized program work. Admittedly, the structure is very delicate and is tied together with fine strands that can be easily destroyed if not carefully nurtured. It is not structured in the sense that the track program is structured, i.e., where each step is outlined and you simply watch progress being made along the steps.

To digress a moment, distinctions must be made among educational terminology being used today to characterize all of these different forms of individualization. You constantly hear such terms as discovery learning, learning to learn, personal growth, self-direction, individual productivity, self-selection, and sometimes the term self-propulsion is used. Interest centers, exploratory learning, discovery learning -- these are all terms linked to the spider web modle of individualization. When you hear these terms, relate them to the concept of individual pacing and self-directionality mentioned previously. And these terms are quite different from those associated with prescribed instruction. Recall that prescribed individualized programs are individual in pacing only, as characterized by the railroad track model. Terms commonly associated with this form are: continuous progress, mastery of sequential skills, educational assessment or academic achievement, or programmed instruction, computerized instruction, the systems approach to education, and performance contracting with pre-test and post-test measures. These terms convey concepts that are essentially related to the prescribed form of individual instruction.

There is much confusion in the educational world today about these different forms of individualization. Educators and teachers use some terminology that is an admixture of the two forms without being aware of the differences between prescribed and personal forms of individualization and the real differences in the concepts which underlie them. We must understand the base and the root from which each set of terms is derived. Otherwise present-day confusions will persist.

There are several steps basic to successfully implementing individualized reading of the personal type. These underlie the spider web form of individualized instruction. When you give youngsters freedom to select from a wide array the materials which are interesting to them, you automatically give them freedom to move through that material at their own pace. Accordingly, each decides the extent to which he spends time, or becomes involved in the materials which have been self-selected. If you are going to give them these freedoms, then you have to set up a companion system of responsibilities to make sure that their reading is productive. Thus when talking about six steps, we are talking about components or sets of responsibilities which underlie the personal form of individualized reading. This is the substance with which you spin your spider web or weave your netting.

The idea that the classroom environment is fundamental cannot be emphasized enough. This first step is crucial. Many teachers who have wanted to move out of the basal textbook program, for example, start by taking three groups or four groups through the same sets of materials,

yet all they accomplish is to complete almost all the parts of the lessons with each group. They end up doing the same thing at different times. That is very different from the classroom atmosphere being described here. Where you have youngsters choosing their own books and making themselves go through print under their own momentum, the key lies in building a strong silent reading time and in providing strong instructional guidance.

Let me digress a minute and tell you about some of my own experiences. Once I taught a third grade from February to June. When I entered I found youngsters grouped at four tables. There were individual chair-desk arrangements, but the former teacher had grouped them together so that there were ten youngsters over here at what I called the "able" table. Eight youngsters were grouped in what I termed the "high-middle" table, there was another group known as the "lower-middle," and down here at the left were five boys and a girl, and we know what table that was. The teacher had started to move the able youngsters out of basal readers into self-selection, and they were doing quite well. Being impatient I wanted to move fast, so one of the very first things I did was to free the rest of the class from the bonds of the basal. The youngsters were told, "You can read the textbook or not, and you don't have to read the next story in sequence unless you want to. I'm not going to pace you through the stories." I taught them about selection of materials. My plan was to have the youngsters all sitting quietly reading books. Then everything would be lovely and then I could have a variety of activities progressing simultaneously. I would be free to talk with the children about books each had read. Well, it didn't quite work out that way.

To introduce reading each day I had a chart that I called Quiet Reading Time. This chart listed the basic rules of quiet reading: Read quietly, Choose a book, Write about a book, Have a conference; seemingly a simple set of rules. But after about ten days I had to admit it had become a noisy reading time rather than a quiet reading time. I soon noticed that there were some characteristic reading behaviors that were anything but productive. I subsequently came to identify these behaviors into the three groupings: wanderers, the gossips, and the squirrels.

To the gossips, I said that unless they were quiet we could not finish the reading, and if they persisted in talking during reading time we would have to make up the lost time after school. To the wanderers ("I can't find my book," "I left my book at home," "I lost my book," "My brother has my book," "Somebody took my book"), I used instructional guidance. Instructional guidance became a period of time at the beginning of silent reading to ensure that those little housekeeping tasks had been taken care of. Had I been wise I would have done that in the first place. The best example I can give for instructional guidance is the day I told Jimmy to get a book, keep still, sit down, and start reading. That does a lot for quiet reading time.

Obviously I was struggling and fumbling. In my clumsiness I was making a lot of mistakes. But gradually conditions improved; in about three months we were doing much better. It was out of this experience that I learned fundamental concepts such as the term USSR. USSR is

an acronym for Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading. This concept is fundamental to personal productive reading. You will have some youngsters who tell you in all kinds of ways that they do not really care whether they read a book or not. Now USSR (which has nothing to do with the friendly relations we are now building with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) is a powerful technique yet to be developed for producing the kinds of readers needed in this country. The hardest task the teacher has is to produce USSR with the low-powered readers. Yet teachers must try. Each individual must learn to go on his own. If we don't succeed with low-powered readers, it does not make much difference what else we do. Eventually most high-powered readers can develop productive silent reading with or without you. Most middle-powered readers get some USSR power by practice in school, but our low-powered readers are not getting it. USSR is their ultimate hope.

The uninterrupted part is very important. It helps to build personal competence. The independent part, the ability to sustain oneself, to carry oneself on, and to keep going with print are the ultimate aim. These are characteristics that the low-powered readers most frequently lack.

Let me give you two examples. Danny was a hyperactive boy. He had word skill development sufficient to handle third grade material, but lacking independence he could not do this on his own. When I directed him or told him, "Read this," when I told him precisely what to do next, he could usually do it. But when Danny was given freedom to move himself through print, he often could not move himself through the first sentence. During conferences or book talks Danny would get up and interrupt. He had to get up. He could not sit still. And Danny was born funny. Every time Danny got up, fifteen people around him laughed. He was a wonderful comical kid. So each day he'd come back to me and tell me, "Mr. Hunt, I've read this much . . ." It might be a paragraph. I'd say, "That's fine, now go back and read the next one." To make a long story short, over the period of time I watched Danny go from the point where he could not get himself through a sentence to the point where he could get himself through a full-length book. He finally reached the point where he could sustain himself for long stretches of print with deep mental involvement, good continuity and a steady flow of ideas. This is what USSR is all about.

Mark was emotionally disturbed. His motives were very devious. He would do anything to get attention, and that meant some pretty ugly acts with other youngsters. Inevitably Mark would get up and move around during quiet reading time. He would constantly interrupt. Yet Mark had word recognition power that could carry him far beyond the fourth grade reading level. He could recognize words almost at seventh grade level, well beyond his ability to give them meaning. But, again, the basic problem was that he could not sustain himself in silent reading. He could not keep his mind on ideas; he could not track ideas, so he could not learn from print. By the end of the year he learned to do this kind of reading to a minimum degree. He had made a start in the right direction.

Let me summarize USSR by saying we have made some gross errors with our low-powered readers. Our usual strategy has been one of trying to get them to imitate the oral reading of youngsters in the middle and high groups. We try to perfect their oral reading. To me this is going about the problem backwards. We should first help the youngster sustain himself in silent reading. Only when this has been accomplished should we concern ourselves with oral expression in reading.

My colleague Robert McCracken, of Western Washington State College, advocates that teachers start a sustained silent reading period with a very few minutes of time, the length of time depending primarily on the stability of your group. When working with groups, such as I've worked with, you begin with very short time periods. You set down the rules rather rigidly. An example would be:

> Have everyone get his materials ahead of time. Make it clear to each that he read throughout the time allotted. Use a timer or some other signal device to end the period. Don't allow interruptions. At first youngsters that can't do well will pretend, or fake reading. You must accept this as you initiate your USSR program. But eventually most get the idea. As the teacher, you read while the youngsters are reading. This sets the example. Don't try to help with unknown words at this time. They can skip them. Teach them to get ideas the best that they can. Study words <u>after</u> the USSR time. Establish the idea that there is nothing more important within this silent reading time frame than getting as much out of your own book as you possibly can. Those who cannot get ideas out of the words should get them from the pictures. Concentrate on helping them to get their minds locked into some idea of consequence.

These strategies are designed to aid low-powered readers. They are the individuals about whom we must think seriously.

To close my talk, let me say a word about book talks and conferences. Many teachers have difficulty with book conferences. The never-ending need is for more time. There are some basic misunderstandings about the book talk, or conference, as a concept. Every teacher needs to realize that there are two forms of reading instruction. One I call intensive, which emerges from the textbook program as represented by the track plan. Recall that in this form every youngster is required to read very thoroughly, comprehensively, and in depth. This is best characterized as sponge-type reading. Here the reader is supposed to take all the ideas from beginning to end and soak them all up in his mind. The proper procedure is to start at the beginning and work your way through to the very end. When you are finished, you are supposed to have ideas in your head.

There is another form of reading, which can be termed exploratory or extensive reading. This is the idea of exploring ideas in the great world of books. This is best characterized as detective reading.

Detective reading means searching out the most important ideas for yourself from among the vast array of ideas in any printed materials. It means judging the relative worth of ideas. The reader must concentrate on the few ideas that really make a lasting difference. Think of this as "What's the big idea?" reading. The reader is searching for the big idea. This contrasts with recounting, reviewing, or repeating all of the ideas. The reader must continually judge the few ideas that make the real difference.

As teachers, you are responsible for teaching both of these forms of reading. Programmed prescribed instruction systems are good for developing intensive, sponge-type reading. But in the individualized type of reading, where the youngsters are selecting, and pacing themselves, you are building the exploratory, searching-out kind of reading.

The major mistake made by teachers while holding book talks and conferences is in carrying over procedures from intensive reading. The procedure of checking every book, every page, every word, every idea that the child has read is part of intensive reading instruction. When you carry over into exploratory reading the idea that you are a checker, that you are supposed to check each and every thing that each child has read, you will be overwhelmed. You should not even start, for it will not work. Children read so fast and so much that you'll be bogged down. To encourage exploratory reading, highlight big ideas. To encourage sustained reading, avoid checking for every detail.

The second mistake commonly made is to listen to children read long passages out of their books. This is not necessary. You need to assess word recognition to some extent, but if your mission is to help children respond to ideas in books (to get some important ideas instead of all of them), your conferences must encourage children to search out ideas rather than listen to efforts at oral reading. Ask the youngster to find one picture or one page that he likes best. Talk about his reasons for the choice. This process begins to open up some comparisons. Do not let children tell everything the book contains. Do not ask the question: "What can you remember about your book?" That's the worst question you can ask. Each question asked a youngster should relate to how wise his choice was and how much he appreciated the book he read. Focus on one or two of the ideas that make a difference in the long run.

Book talks and conferences can be fun, if you remember that your objective is to encourage reading, not check in detail everything that has been read or said in the book. Your objective is to help the youngster realize what he needs to do to improve himself. You are a guide. Talk to the youngster about his reading and what he needs to do to become a better reader. Then you will have taken the first steps to truly improving children's reading. This is how productive readers are made.

BLACK LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Jean B. Sanders

There are times when I'd rather not be called "Dr.," and I'm not sure that I ever want to be called "Ms"--it sounds so sexless. Today I want to be called "Mrs." Somehow that title gives me more right to talk about my grandchildren.

I have eight grandchildren, and I could go on about them for several hours. I don't intend to. I mention them because I want to emphasize the fact that my interest in my subject for today is more than academic. I am concerned about children and the world in which they are growing up--my own grandchildren and all others.

Books are a part of their world. Certainly, as May Hill Arbuthnot has said, "Books are no substitute for living, but they can add immeasurably to its richness." (Children and Books, third ed., p. 2.) Perhaps, if we believe in them strongly enough and use them wisely, books may add to the richness of life by fostering better human relations.

Thirty years ago it was not really possible for children's books to foster better relations between races. Charlemae Rollins writes that in 1941 when she prepared the first edition of We Build Together, a bibliography of children's books that "presented Negroes as human beings and not as stereotypes," the work was "arduous indeed, for few stories could be found that offered a true picture of Negroes in contemporary life--books that Negro children could enjoy without self-consciousness, books with which they could identify satisfactorily, books that white children could read and so learn what Negro young people and children were like." (We Build Together, rev. ed., 1967, pp. ix-x.)

About the time Mrs. Rollins was working on this bibliography, a crusade was started to provide children's books, both reading texts and extracurricular material, which more truthfully depicted minority peoples. At that time, the few existing books with black or other minority characters were those which showed them as stereotypes--not as human beings with diverse occupations, living in many different areas of the country, and belonging to various sociological groups--human beings with emotional reactions and thought processes not unlike their white counterparts. This crusade was largely incited and promulgated by librarians and social workers--not by teachers, who should have been the first to demand such books.

Today, thirty years later, the situation has changed. Augusta Baker, in the Introduction to the New York City Public Library's latest bibliography truthfully reports: "Now we have books about black professionals, judges, sailors, and cowboys. We have books about black conservatives as well as books about black militants--blacks,

in fact, as they are found in every walk of life." (The Black Experience in Children's Books, 1971, p. ii.) In addition, one may add that we have all kinds of books for all age levels: picture books, fiction, biography, travel, folktales, poetry, purely informational texts, and readers. In attempting a bibliography of black literature for children and adolescents, I found over two hundred such books published in the single year 1971, not counting textbooks. These books include many phases of life in America and in Africa. Some are poor books, some are mediocre, and some are excellent. The number of good ones has increased to the point that interested organizations are now turning their attention to filling the gaps in children's literature with needed books about American Indians, Chicanos, and other racial and ethnic minorities.

The 1960's were most productive of books with black characters. Yet, in 1970, many people were disappointed that these books had not served the purpose for which they were intended. It had been hoped that by providing books which could make self-identity possible for black children and books which would make white children aware that black people were not all menial servants, some sort of harmony between races could be achieved. In 1970, in the introduction to a bibliography called About 100 Books, Ann G. Wolfe wrote rather pessimistically: "Looking back, we see now that we were perhaps too optimistic about prospects for social progress and peace in this country, and abroad. . . . we know now that some of our earlier convictions about how to reduce group hostility were not borne out."

It is my personal belief, however, that it is too soon to give up the idealistic concept that children's books can help to achieve peaceful human relations. In the first place, one generation is not enough to change attitudes that have developed over so many years. But perhaps more important to any effect these books may have is the fact that they are not yet available to many children, although the publishers have done there part in producing them. They are not available to many children simply because elementary teachers have failed to make them available.

Some teachers are not even aware that such books exist. Some teachers are so smug, so self-satisfied, so set in their ways that even when they are made aware of such books, they don't make any effort to acquaint their students with them. What good can these books possibly do if they are not read?

As a teacher of children's literature at the college level, I know of the idealism of many young teachers-to-be, their hope for the things they wish to accomplish in the classrooms where they will ultimately teach. They recognize the need to prevent prejudice from forming in the white children they will teach, and the need to provide black children with pride of race and the kind of education that will give them a chance in a world of unequal odds. I don't doubt the intent of these young people to use any means they can find in their teaching to establish better human relations in this country.

But even for these young people with altruistic ideals, there are going to be hurdles to jump in the use of children's books with black characters. They must first of all learn to judge the publishers' offerings in order to know which ones to try to make available to their students. Then they must overcome the reluctance of the principal or the school board to invest in these books. Even when money is not a problem, some principals and school boards are not convinced that these books are necessary, and some of them have ingrained prejudice that keeps them from spending money on books about black people. Provided the principal and the school board will buy the books, there is still the possibility of prejudice in the community (particularly if the community is a Midwestern non-urban one) which will cause criticism or even dismissal of a beginning teacher who dares to introduce these books.

In addition to prejudice from white adults, racism on the part of black militant groups sometimes complicates the choice of books. Some militant groups insist that only a black author or a black artist can produce a child's book which truly depicts black characters; hence they would restrict the choice of books to those done by members of their own race. Such a contention is in direct opposition to the concept of universality which holds that all men are brothers—alike regardless of skin color.

Yet in spite of all these hurdles in the way of young, idealistic teachers, the main hope that these books can accomplish better human relations lies with the young people going out to teach.

I am not suggesting that older teachers be fired and their places taken by younger ones; nor am I generalizing that all older teachers will fail to introduce their students to books which might work against prejudice. But from personal experience, as I myself am an older one, I know how hard it is to change one's ways of teaching and to start using new materials.

Moreover, some observations bother me. I believe that there is truly a generation gap when it comes to choosing books for children. This, of course, is a broad generalization to which there are exceptions. Yet, the experiences of my grandchildren and occasions when I have visited elementary classrooms make me believe that some sort of in-service training in children's literature--not just to introduce black literature--might be desirable. For example, one third-grade teacher of my acquaintance completely ignores the many beautiful and creative books her students would enjoy and instead has them memorize facts about early American authors' lives. That is her idea of a literature program. Another reads all of Hawthorne's Twice Told Tales to her classes in the belief that she is preparing them for reading adult literature. A second-grade teacher told me not long ago that she doesn't waste any time on new books. "My children memorize good old tried and true poetry like 'The Psalm of Life,' poems that will teach them something," she bragged. These are extreme cases, of course. But I want to make the point that many teachers have failed to keep up with trends in literature, though they may have been forced

to learn new math and new science.

I have suggested in-service training for these teachers, because I doubt that they would ever attend a conference or any meeting where they might learn that times have changed in books as well as in other areas. When they do attend conferences, they elect sessions dealing with subject material which they will agree with, rather than sessions whose titles sound the least bit controversial.

The gap between ignorance and awareness is not always a generation gap. Young people as well as older ones may have an ignorance of new trends which is the result of insularity. Here in the Middle West especially in non-urban areas, we are not faced with some of the problems that beset schools in large urban areas on both coasts, simply because we do not have as many children in our schools from minority races. And when we are not faced with problems, we seldom seek new methods and materials. Nevertheless, students in all our schools need books with black characters. A returning teacher in last year's summer session remarked, "I simply didn't know these books existed. I hadn't even thought about them, because ours is an all-white consolidated school." Then she added, very wisely, "We need such books because our children seldom if ever come into contact with people of other races. When they leave our community and do meet those of other skin color, they ought to know that skin color doesn't make people different."

You may have noticed that I have not remarked on the literary quality of the many books with black characters that have appeared in the last few decades. That's a strange omission for an English teacher perhaps. I will certainly have to say, here, that not all these books are of high literary quality. Yet, as a grandmother I'm sure that the lack of literary quality would not prevent my recommending some of these books. For the sake of the world in which our children live, the social value should be allowed to outweigh literary considerations in some cases.

What good can these books do toward establishing more harmonious human relations? Frankly, I doubt that anyone knows. I have read many reports of studies made on the possible effect of reading on behavior, and none of them impress me greatly. I don't know whether a black child will be happier and better adjusted because he finds his counterpart in Steptoe's Stevie or whether a white child will be prevented from forming racial prejudice just because she can empathize with Mary Jane. But I do believe in the power of books; and I believe we ought to give these books a chance to do what they may be able to do.

As a literary researcher, I know good juvenile books with black characters are available in considerable numbers. I know the trouble and work that went into making these books available. As a grandmother, I'm frightened and angry because many elementary teachers are not using these books. I want my grandchildren to know all men as their brothers

and to find joy in living in a world free of prejudice. If books can help--even a little--then I'll yell at any elementary teacher who doesn't at least expose them to such books.

Finally, after all this haranguing, let me offer a last note which is more constructive. If you are not familiar with the sort of books I've been talking about, try them--you may find you'll like them! The first step is to consult a good bibliography--or your librarian. Then select several that sound interesting to you. After you've read them yourself, try reading one aloud to a group of children. Don't treat it as a social study. Read it just for fun. Then, if the children want to talk about it, let them talk. But don't preach a sermon on the book. A good story speaks for itself, and you may be pleasantly surprised that children in your group who have never commented on books before will comment. Don't ever read aloud a book that you don't like, just because you think it may be good for the children. You'll find some you can't help liking!

TO EACH HIS OWN BOOK

Elizabeth Weller

Never before has there been such recognition for the importance of children's books as there is today. Never before has there been such a sensitivity to the variety of children in our country, children who have always been with us but who have not found their counterparts in books as they do today. I would like to discuss how we can get these children and books together to help children discover the inspiration of reading for enjoyment and self-fulfillment. I would like us to consider the present status of reading and some of the causes of children's attitudes toward reading. I would like us to consider the future of children's reading--first a gloomy prediction--followed by a brighter outlook. If we help children in their quest for reading for enjoyment and self-fulfillment by providing interesting content that will comfort, amuse, touch, make them dream, laugh, shudder, weep and think, the future can be radiant.

The average youngster in the U.S. has spent 11,000 hours in school by the time he graduates from high school, and 15,000 hours watching television. According to Dr. Gerald L. Looney of the University of Arizona, the average adult in this country spends ten years of his life watching television.[1]

With this commitment to television, parents have little time to read. We find many teachers who do not read unless they must. Many of our young teachers have never known life without television. It is not unusual to hear one of our talented young teachers say, "I can't read a newspaper. I have always gotten my news on TV." In all probability, as lifetime viewers of Saturday morning TV, many young teachers have become habituated to the relentless interruptions of commercials (an average of one commercial every two minutes in November, 1971, according to Earle Barcus of Boston University).[2]

With these adult examples before them, is it any wonder children are like Mexican jumping beans in the classroom and the media centers. Most of them are nonlinear-oriented (the snob term for "picture viewers" or "nonreaders of words in lines").[3]

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[1]Nancy Larrick, "Will Children Still Read Children's Books," Publishers Weekly, 201:15 (April 10, 1972), 122.

[2]Ibid., p. 123.

[3]Ibid.

Television is often given the major blame for diverting children from their reading. Yet publishers have done their share to lessen reading pleasure through their deluge of teaching aids, ready-made tests and other deadening accessories. Now we find that A-V producers are bringing out joy killers to accompany book-related materials. Prestigious Caedmon, for example, provides matching word lists and spirit duplicating masters in a "What Is Poetry" kit.

What is to be the future of the nonlinear-oriented society? For the majority, there will be more listening and viewing, less time for silent reading. Even though there will always be some dedicated readers, the minority is shrinking.

The age at which children pass the peak of reading interest seems to come earlier now. Children who read hungrily in second and third grades are tapering off in the fourth and fifth grades. Schools have often accelerated this tendency. For example, there is the school librarian who permits a class to borrow only at 2:30 each Thursday. There are many teachers who still administer the lie detector test in the form of a required book report. Children soon learn the more they read, the greater is the punishment.

Perhaps one of the best indices to the future of children's books and children's reading is in the experience of the paperback book clubs. Their sales depend upon the choices and purchases made by children. We find that children prefer paperbacks to the hardcover, reinforced bindings in the library. With eight out of twelve of the major publishers for children bringing out ninety percent of their children's books in paperback, children will find many books that will appeal to their interests.

A study of paperback club offerings show more and more books growing out of the mass media: television, movies and comics. These are among the best sellers. Also among the best sellers are more and more segmented books--those geared to the two-minute TV attention span. Stop after a page, pick it up again, start anywhere and no continuity has been lost. Some of these are non-books: riddles, jokes, tricks and how to's of every sort.

There are also many honest-to-goodness books which are popular: the anthologies of pop/rock lyrics and a growing number of poetry books. These not only fit the TV child's off-again-on-again pattern of reading, but they are meant to be heard, and he is accustomed to listening. More and more A-V material is related to books, some of which draw the potential reader to the books, while others turn him away. The closer the recording or the tape is to the printed page, the stronger the bridge.

If books available for children include those attuned to their interests and their patterns of reading, if A-V aids focus on the real book, and if we have faith in the children to choose their own books and to delight in the pleasures of reading, the future is bright. The

children are ready. Are we adults ready? What can we do to help children find the inspiration of reading for enjoyment and self-fulfillment?

Sixty percent of the population supposedly has the ability to read without severe mechanical problems but has little or no inclination to read except perhaps that which is required of them.[4] This is a sobering thought, to say the least. Are there any recommendations for dealing with students psychologically disinclined to read?

Since reading is a process and not a "subject," one becomes proficient by practice. Thus to help the child achieve the goal of reading for enjoyment and self-fulfillment, we must encourage the child to read widely beyond that reading he does in the classroom situation. With wide outside reading, the child can come to understand that reading is a joy in and of itself and not simply something to do connected with school work. Children's experiences with books should always, always be rewarding, unforced and satisfying.

The content of the book is more important than anything else if one is to reduce the problem of reluctance. It is the content of a well-written book that makes the reader think and feel, that introduces him to new facts, and that suggests some answers to problems important to him in his now or in the future. It is the content that will turn people into readers and readers into individuals.

Let's consider this statement once made by Guy de Maupassant as a guide to reading that could be used to satisfy many needs or desires of children.

The public as a whole is composed of various groups whose cry to us writers is:

Comfort me
Amuse me
Touch me
Make me dream
Make me laugh
Make me shudder
Make me weep
Make me think.

At times children are conscious of their reading needs, other times they are not. Any one of these needs can be satisfied in part by reading quality literature. Still I am not advocating that children should employ books as the exclusive guide to life. Yet I do believe that literature

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[4]Aidan Chambers, The Reluctant Reader (London: Pergamon Press, 1969), p. 4.

offers children an opportunity to experience an engagement with life. Literature becomes an engagement with life as we immerse ourselves in the total body of our reading. This process takes a lifetime, but its beginnings stem from our early years of reading. When a child experiences a story near to his feeling, he discovers within himself different reactions to the same situation. He lives them out alone and then shares his very personal responses with his special friends, real or imaginary. The child needs literature, for it gives, as Robert Lawson put it, ".....the chuckles.....the gooseflesh.....the glimpses of glory" he loves.

Comfort me, says one reader. How can one get comfort from reading a story that comes close to showing some of the same situations one actually faces in one's own life?

Amuse me. There are many choices in children's books that can fill the request "amuse me." For example, the excellent fantasies by Jean Merrill, such as The Black Sheep and The Pushcart War, not only amuse children but also provide considerable thoughtful discussion. The Pushcart War is certainly one of the most original fanciful stories of our time. The time is 1976, the place New York City and the problem the fact there are so many huge trucks that traffic on Manhattan Island is in a constant snarl. The three big men in trucking decide that the first step in their campaign to eliminate other vehicles is to attack the pushcart owners. But the little people won't be put down; they fight with pin , and the number of flat tires puts such a strain on repair facilities that trucks are left stranded over all the island. In the most ingenious fashion, Jean Merrill attacks corruption in office and monopoly in business and she does it with bland humor that avoids any note of bitterness. We need not limit the amusing to the obvious. Children can be taught to recognize the techniques of the satirist. They need some direct instruction and repeated exposure to it.

There are books to take the child to places he may never see in person, to acquaint him with peoples and periods of the past, to answer his questions and broaden his horizons, to help him empathize with others through experiencing their tragedies and joys, to understand himself better through meeting people with problems like his own, and to give him relaxation, stimulation and sheer pleasure. Regardless of the child's purpose for reading he must have as much opportunity as possible to come into contact with books, opportunity to read the book he wishes based on his own choice and taste. The child must realize his selection is a very personal matter. A book enjoyed by one person may leave another quite bored. In other words--to each his own book!

FROM GAMES TO BOOKS

Patricia M. Brown

Two types of nonreaders are presently the cause of much concern among educators. The first of these is the child who can read but doesn't. "We have led him right up to the water and still he won't drink." This child's reading appetite could be whetted with some literary salt. He needs to be read to, to learn to anticipate the arrival of the sports page of the daily newspaper. He could read the directions to put a model airplane together, then check out the mechanical workings of a plane in the encyclopedia and perhaps even read a biography of Wilbur and Orville Wright. In short, the nonreader who can but won't read needs to be coaxed into seeing reading as a source of endless information and entertainment.

The nonreader who does not read because he cannot decode words presents a different sort of challenge. He too needs motivation and stimulation. He also needs to develop and practice the decoding skills he lacks. His strengths and weaknesses should be carefully diagnosed and evaluated. Reading materials should then be selected which will remedy the deficiencies. Diagnosis and material selection are difficult, time-consuming tasks. Motivating the remedial reader to work on the materials so carefully selected is often the hardest task of all. The use of commercial and teacher-made games is one solution to the problem of how to get children to work on those specific skills your diagnosis has indicated are essential to and lacking in their repertoire of reading skills.

This past year I worked as an elementary reading specialist. At the beginning of the year I did extensive diagnostic testing with each child and listed the specific skills that he needed to work on. I then chose materials which would help him overcome his particular problems. The last 10 minutes of each 30 minute period was set aside for a reading games time. My initial purpose in using the games was to motivate the children to work hard during the first 20 minutes so they could play games during the last 10 minutes. At this point I didn't realize how many skills reading games could teach. As the year went on, I began to realize that the children were very rapidly learning the words or skills called for in a particular game. It was then that I began devising and assigning specific games for specific children to help the remediation of those areas of weakness pinpointed during the diagnosis.

The results of this experiment were most gratifying. The children were learning the skills and having a most enjoyable time doing so. Towards the end of the year we spent the first 15 minutes of each period doing "sustained reading" (everyone, even the teacher, reads any book he chooses). The last 15 minutes was spent in what the children called "playing" and I had learned to call "skill building."

What are these magic games? How do they work? Where do you get them? A game has two parts. The first and most important part for the children is the strategy, how you play and how you win. The strategy should be simple and quick. Young children would much rather play five quick games than one long one. Two strategies which I found most useful were the Rummy Strategy and the Concentration Strategy. Both are familiar to the children.

In Rummy the dealer deals five cards to each player. Each card has a word on it. Children have a match when they get three cards with the same element. This element, which can be anything, is shown in red letters. When a child has three cards that match he puts them down saying the three words. He is not penalized for not knowing how to pronounce a word. The other children or teacher help him to decode. Children in turn pick up the top card from the pile or the discards, put down their matches and discard. The first child who gets rid of all his cards is the winner.

The Concentration strategy is similar to that used on the popular television show. Words or pictures are put on cards which are placed face down in rows and columns. The first child turns over two cards and if he has a match says the words or picture names and takes the pair. He continues to play until he misses. An unmatched pair is returned to its spot and the other "contestants" try to "concentrate" on what they saw where. The play continues until all the cards are matched and the player with the most matches is the winner. Most children seemed to genuinely enjoy both these game strategies. The children with better visual memories would often prefer Concentration which they said took "skill" to Rummy which they saw as involving only "luck."

There are as many other strategies as there are creative teachers and students to devise them. Two of my sixth-grade football enthusiasts finally got turned on to a game built around a football strategy. A field was drawn on a large piece of poster board; pictures of current football heroes were pasted around the sides. The boys had a limited amount of time to match and say pairs of words. For each word matched and identified the football was moved 10 yards toward the goal line. Each "touchdown" was worth six points. One extra point could be earned by choosing and reading a word from an "easy" pile, two points by choosing a word from a "toughies" pile.

While it is a quick simple strategy that counts with the children, the teacher's concern is mainly with the skills she builds into a particular game. Both commercial and teacher-made Rummy games were used by the children. The commercial games were Phonic Rummy A, B, C, and D. These games are produced by the Kenworthy Educational Service, Buffalo, New York, and cost about $2.00 each. Each game contains two different decks of cards. A delineation of the specific elements taught in each game will serve as an example of how a single strategy can be used to teach numerous skills.

Phonic Rummy A contains only short vowel words. One deck has easy consonant-vowel-consonant words; the other adds beginning and ending blends and digraphs. Rummy B teaches long vowel sounds. One deck contains words that end in e. The other is composed of words in which the long vowel sound is made by two letters together. The two decks in Rummy C work with words having the oo, ow, oa, ew, ar, or, and ou combinations. Rummy D works with harder er, ir, ur, or words and two syllable words ending in the ble, dle, ple, gle, and tle combinations. The children and I made other games using the Rummy strategy. Initial blend games were made by pasting pictures beginning with specific blends on the cards. More advanced games were made by using words beginning with the common suffixes and prefixes. We found the game moved more swiftly and the children experienced more success if we limited each game to four different phonemic elements. At the end of the year each child took home the game he had made to play with during the summer.

Concentration games were as varied as the Rummy games. Particularly difficult words such as with, went, want, was and saw were put on cards, two cards for each word. The children who needed to build a sight vocabulary then tried to get a match by finding and saying the two identical words. We limited the number of pairs to ten in this game so that play moved along at a rapid pace. All the phonemic elements taught in the Rummy games could also be taught in a Concentration game by making up packets containing words with three or four different phonemic elements. Any two words with the same red letters would match. Concentration can also be used to help children determine the number of syllables in a word. One, two, three and four syllable words are put into one game. Two words match if they have the same number of syllables.

The Bingo strategy was most useful in developing a sight vocabulary. The words to be learned were typed on cards to resemble the familiar Bingo card. Duplicates of these words were also written on slips of paper. The slips were then pulled out of a jar and children covered the word with a marker. Bingo could be won in the traditional ways. The winner became the caller, giving each child a chance to recognize as well as call out desired sight words.

Tic-Tac-Toe games were very popular with the children. The usual Tic-Tac-Toe board was constructed and children were able to put their marker where they chose by responding correctly to a task. This strategy was particularly effective in spelling and dividing words into syllables. To use this as a spelling game, the children should work in pairs. One child picks a card, reads the word and puts it in a sentence. His opponent then writes the word and puts it in a sentence. His opponent then writes the word on a magic slate. If it is spelled correctly he gets to place his X or O on the board. The teacher, of course, is responsible for choosing appropriate spelling words for each pair of children. To use this same strategy to teach syllabic division, each child chooses a card and writes the word on the card in syllables. He then turns the card over to check the correct

syllabication on the back.

And on and on and on . . . Once you start using games to teach there is no end to the fun and games you and the children enjoy. Once they know a lot of words and how to decode a lot more, it is not too difficult to move them from games to books.

UPTIGHT: COMPETITION TIME

Frances I. Williams

"I get so uptight every time I go into the library because there is so much in there that I want to read--so much that I want to know and I haven't had time to read it all." This is a statement made by a senior girl in casual conversation as she was filling out forms for college admission.

This kind of statement, rare as it may be, always gives a glow to the English teacher and/or the librarian, both of whom can feel a measure of success in having "properly motivated" at least one student.

A close look at a typical day for Mary reveals just how much in competition reading has been with various other worthwhile activities throughout high school. With art as a major interest, she spends some of her "free time" each day with her painting or ceramics; she plays guitar and composes both the music and the lyrics for many of the numbers she plays and sings; she owns a horse which she rides daily; she is an expert tennis player; she has a part-time job to earn money for college; she is interested in community affairs and plays an active role in teen-age organizations. When would she have all the time for extra reading that she would like and maintain the high academic average she has had?

This is only one student. Others have music lessons, dancing lessons, sports, clubs, church organizations, cheerleading, and I am sure there are others. We surely can't ignore television as a competitor. Mary Desjardins in School Libraries, spring issue, 1972, reports that 46 percent of senior boys and 61 percent of senior girls, and 61 percent of freshman boys, and 74 percent of freshman girls view television more than two hours daily. These same students reported that 55 percent of the girls and 48 percent of the boys spend more than one-half hour a day reading.

I believe that all of this has a message for us as classroom teachers who hope to help all students enjoy reading so much that it will become a permanent pleasure. Obviously we must help them find the time as well as find the books. This, of course, is in addition to helping them gain skills needed by them including understanding and interpreting content, developing adequate vocabularies, understanding concepts, seeing inferences, evaluating materials read, and broadening interests. We must also teach literary works prescribed by a required curriculum. Some of us may become discouraged when it seems that our job is Hydra-headed and we are pulled in one hundred directions at one time. However, I believe the way is open for us to try several avenues to arouse more of our students to become book-curious, to help them expand their experiences through books, and to find real enjoyment in books.

Some of our students may have lockers in the corridor next to the library door but they do not open that door to go in; others lament that they can't find anything "good to read" there; or others boldly claim that they have already read everything in that library. How many times in the past year have you heard, "There's nothing in our library that's relevant"?

How do we motivate these students to want to read? Someone has defined a reluctant reader as the "turned off kid who hasn't had any positive experiences with reading." How do we turn him on so that he will have positive experiences? Booklists haven't done it. Required reading of a specific number of books in a grading period hasn't done it. A rigid English curriculum hasn't done it.

All of us know that the best recommendation for a book is that given by one's peers. We must, then, find more time in our classrooms to provide for informal conversations about books. I am not referring to the old, and I hope out-of-practice, "book report." These conversations can be the most convincing when they are the spontaneous ones of "I've just finished a good book." They might be given to the entire class or to a particular student or to a small group. This could take only a few minutes or a large part of a period depending upon the number of students "turned on" by a special book. In any event, it can be time well spent and we need not feel guilty for delaying the assigned lesson. Through these informal conversations, students gain confidence in their ability to read and in their ability to talk about what they read. This, with direction, can lead some to discover the author's purpose, the theme, the mood, and other points teachers feel are important. Most of all they increase enjoyment and enthusiasm about a book.

Accessibility is an important key to reading. If some students don't go to the books, we can bring carefully chosen books to the students. If the librarian isn't already our best friend, we must cultivate that friendship. Books brought into the classroom never fail to get "takers." Yes, some of them get lost but hopefully they are read. Inexpensive paperbacks have been a real blessing, for we can stock our reading tables and shelves with titles that really move. Again, let's take time to talk about them.

We have been under attack for so many failures: curricula, organization of materials, methods of teaching, even classroom arrangement. Perhaps some good things will come of this criticism. Flexibility, creative teaching, innovation, independent study, individualized programs, alternatives are terms in the professional vocabularies today. Let's make them work! English teachers have been known to be an inflexible group, somewhat reluctant to try new approaches. Now that we know that in order for us to teach not all students must always read the same short story or the same novel or the same anything and that no literary work is sacred at any special grade level, we have the opportunity and challenge to provide alternatives. Classes can be more productive, even more exciting, and the reading more fun for the individual students when they have choices within a framework of study.

For too long we have prescribed students' reading based on what we thought was good for them. Today's students are becoming more vocal about this prescription and we are slowly learning that we get along better when we listen to each other. Our students today are interested in TODAY--today's problems are real to them: racism, drugs, early marriage, school drop-outs, war, environmental control . . . . Even the most reluctant high school reader will read on these subjects whether the material is that which the teacher recommends or not. Some of today's writing for adolescents may, according to recognized criteria, lack literary value but it may definitely deal with the world as adolescents see it.

An energetic reading consultant organized a "Breakfast With Books" group which met weekly during the past school year. Approximately twenty early birds came at 7 A.M. to hear about and to discuss, over rolls and hot chocolate, books of their choice. Some of the members didn't miss a meeting; several read all of the books mentioned during the year. One boy who was a slower reader but who enjoyed all of the meetings said that he had learned about a lot of books and had a list of ones he wanted to read. That, certainly, is a good beginning.

The school librarian sponsored a "Read-In" program in which she invited students to write briefly about books they had enjoyed. One interesting feature of this was that it appealed to many students we might not have expected to participate voluntarily. It provided an opportunity for them to see their writing efforts in print. Could there be a more rewarding experience to boost self concept?

For some students, films, tape recordings, records open avenues to reading; others may even progress from film viewing and discussion to film production. This surely is one way of blending reading, writing, and speaking into meaningful activity. We are aware, however, that turning on electronic media doesn't necessarily "turn on" all to be readers.

In fact, if we are honest, we will admit that no one trick of magic will "turn on" all readers and that not all readers will be aroused to the degree exclaimed by Mary. We cannot expect equal performance in reading of all of our students any more than we can expect equal performance in running or swimming or any other activity requiring specific skills. We cannot ignore the differences in adolescents, their backgrounds, their abilities, their interests, their motivation, and their plans. We must not ignore the studies and research which indicate that we need to re-examine our curricula and our goals in light of some of our failures; we need not sacrifice the good from the current practices and materials. We need some of the past and the present to build for the new. In "A Decade of Teen-Age Reading in Baltimore, 1960-1970," reported by Linda Lapides of Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, Jane Eyre and Gone With the Wind survived both lists in company in 1970 with Catcher in the Rye, Joy in the Morning, Black Like Me, and To Sir, With Love.

Even the most severe critics agree that one main goal of education is to help students find that learning is interesting and even exciting so that they might develop a genuine, intellectual curiosity and a love for knowledge; in addition they might realize that as independent learners they can establish personal identity and become independent and critical thinkers.

Whether we can accomplish this through more informal book talks, through independent study or individualized programs, through a flexible program that permits substitutions for some of the "revered classics," through electronic media, or through the many other ways which others might suggest will depend upon our itensity of effort. The Dartmouth Conference in the summer of 1966 suggested that English teachers stop talking so much about literature and let the students experience more literature; let them use short stories and poems written by the students, dramatize incidents, and read more aloud. This would place more emphasis on students' responses.

It is unrealistic to think that we shall ever succeed one hundred percent; however, I am convinced that through the literature studied in our classrooms we can expand the reading of our students and hopefully many more of them will, like Mary, be "uptight" because they haven't been able to read everything they have wanted to read.

HOW RICH IS THEIR READING?

Louise P. Clark

Concerned teachers and librarians are interested not only in helping children learn the skill of reading, but in the quality of that reading, and in what takes place in the mind of the child as a result. Children who have developed the mechanical abilites involved in reading may still be missing the most exciting possibility--the process of thinking independently and reflectively about the ideas presented by the author. When questioned about a story read quite recently, many students were unable to express an opinion as to the reasons for actions taken by certain characters, or the meaning of an important quotation. They obviously did not become involved enough to spend any effort thinking while they read.

An excellent activity for encouraging the art of critical reading is the sharing of ideas in a group discussion. Students immediately "perk up" when they hear an opinion expressed by a peer with which they violently disagree. Apathy disappears and involvement sets in--involvement in which they are required to give reasons for the statements they make, or to back an opinion with a quotation from the reading. The give and take which occurs in this type of situation can eventually result in many benefits:

1. The habit of reading carefully and intensively
2. An improved ability to state ideas clearly
3. The ability to organize facts and evidence to support an opinion
4. The development of the willingness to listen with respect to opinions of others
5. An increase in the power to think independently and reflectively about new ideas

As one speaking from both good and bad experiences with discussion groups, I would like to state unequivocally that a good group discussion does not just happen! As in so much of teaching, there must be planning, organizing, and preparation to precede the sort of spontaneous, free-wheeling, student-centered activity in which great things happen. Following is a description of an organization which takes much of the time-consuming, organizational preparation from the load of the busy teacher or librarian wishing to lead a discussion group.

The Great Books Foundation, a non-profit educational organization, was founded in 1947 for the purpose of providing reading and discussion programs for people from third grade level through adulthood. The Foundation selects from lists of books considered great by universities, libraries, and other educational organizations; tests them with experimental discussion groups for suitability to age level; and publishes them in paperback boxed sets.

In order to be eligible to order the sets of books and the leader aid, you must complete the Junior Great Books Leader Training Course. The sessions are conducted by professional staff members of the Great Books Foundation, are two hours each, and are held once a week for eight weeks. During the course, the trainees learn the art of questioning--the various techniques that enable them to initiate, sustain and conclude a successful discussion. They learn the importance of having two leaders conducting the session--two sets of eyes and ears (not to mention two minds) will catch twice as many ideas and keep the participants involved more effectively. Much time is spent in learning to recognize and formulate the three types of questions used in this technique:

1. Interpretive--questions pertaining to an important idea in the book to which there are no pre-set right or wrong answers
2. Factual
3. Evaluative

The questions are arranged in clusters. The first question in the cluster is called the "basic question" and should state in a comprehensive fashion a problem to be considered in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of what the author means by what he has said. This basic question is followed by at least eight more interpretive questions which contain ideas related but subordinate to the idea expressed in the basic question. The test of a good cluster of questions is whether or not the co-leaders themselves are genuinely curious about this idea. If they have preconceived notions as to answers, they are apt to lead the discussion too strongly to those conclusions. Questions of fact, which make you recall something the author has said, and questions of evaluation, which ask you to relate the book to your own life, should be used sparingly and only if needed to reinforce the basic idea.

Participants in the course soon discover that much time must be spent with a co-leader in pre-discussions to form effective basic and follow-up questions. Above all, the prospective leader is urged to remember at all times that he is present at the discussion to keep the interplay going between students, not to lead it toward any foregone conclusion of his own. Students should be encouraged to express themselves freely, and then to listen respectfully to the opinions of their peers.

Now to the organization of a Great Book Discussion Group. Obviously, this is not an activity designed to help students having serious reading problems, but an enrichment program for students who are willing and able to read. There can be no discussion if the material has not been carefully read and considered before the meeting. When students enroll in a discussion group, a session should be held to explain the importance of the following rules which will make the discussions as enjoyable as possible:

1. Read the story before the meeting. If you don't you won't be allowed to take part in the discussion.
2. Read very carefully, and more than one time if possible. When you come across words you don't understand, use the dictionary.

3. Take notes as you read. Underline passages in the book about which you have a question, or which you don't understand. Use the blank pages at the end of the story to jot down ideas which occur to you while reading.
4. Talk only about the story. If you start talking about a different story, or about the life of the author, other students will not be able to discuss it, and time will be wasted.
5. Listen carefully and politely when another student is talking. If you don't, you may miss a clue, or an explanation of something which puzzled you.
6. Speak clearly, and be prepared to defend your statements by quotations from the story. Always bring your book to the meeting so we can search for proof together.

More than one grade level can be combined in a group successfully, but the number should be held to fifteen or less. In a group larger than fifteen, there is simply not time for everyone to contribute, and the shy students will be left out completely. Junior Great Books discussion groups can be offered in a variety of ways:

--as an extracurricular activity, usually after school hours, early evening, or on Saturday,
--during school hours as a substitute for study periods,
--as part of the regular curriculum.

Leaders can come from the teaching ranks, or from interested parents who have taken the training course. Students can purchase books themselves, or school systems may purchase them if the activity is part of the curriculum. Meetings should be held every two or three weeks for twelve sessions. The length of meeting recommended is 1½ hours. Letters should be sent to parents explaining the objectives of the program, and enlisting their help in seeing that students are well prepared for the meetings.

Although the leader aids containing interpretive questions are a great help, they should not be relied upon entirely. Leaders should meet to discuss these questions, throw out ones which do not appeal to them, and add ones which have caught their interest while reading the selection. They must be extremely flexible, with many possibilities covered in their prepared questions which will enable them to abandon an idea which does not appeal to students, and follow through with one which does. The discussion, however, should not disintegrate into a bull session on what the students like about the story, but should continue to zero in on one important idea.

Remember, the discussion will usually be successful in proportion to the time and effort spent in pre-discussion by leaders. However, when you see children becoming intense, excited and involved in the

ideas put forth in great literature, you will know that it is worth every minute of it!

Information pertaining to organizing Junior Great Books Discussion Groups courtesy of Great Books Foundation, 307 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60601.

BOOK MAKING FOR BUDDING AUTHORS

Bernice J. Mayhew

Among several important kinds of children's literature perhaps none is more important to children than the literature they create for themselves by their own writing. It is by setting thoughts down on paper that children discover how words fit together, how sentences take shape, how punctuation helps keep ideas clear, and how necessary accurate spelling is for ideas to mean what was intended. It is through publishing their own books that seeds of pride in authorship can be sown, for in the publication experience the work becomes enhanced and the child dignified. It is by having a special nook for the housing of a budding authors' library that an exciting exploration of words and ideas can take place through the reading of peer desires, fantasy, tragedy and humor. First grade is not too soon to start. In some elementary schools from first grade up, the core materials of the reading program can be found in pupils' written work. In other elementary schools, library shelves are sectioned off for pupil-written books that circulate just as do other books in the collection, by means of library cards.

Certainly, encouraging children to write stories and bind them into books is one way teachers can show respect for children's writing.[1] Teachers have known for a long time that pupil writing serves as a motivation for pupil book making; and teachers have known for a long time that the prospect of binding pupil writing into a book has proven to be highly motivational in the production of that writing. Book making in the elementary classroom is, however, seldom explained from beginning to end. That is the purpose of this presentation. To give some suggestions, first of all, about what to do once pupils are inclined to write. Then, to explain how pupils can be shown how to make a cloth-bound book. And finally, how to prepare a place of honor for the books budding authors have made.

How will PUPIL WRITING proceed when book making is the goal?

As mentioned above, motivation in book making provides a circular effect: pupil writing serves as motivation for book making while book making also serves as motivation for pupil writing. At the first stage in the process, however--once pupils are inclined to write--the motivational pay-off in terms of an acceptable product must move in a somewhat orderly sequence. One sensible order is to go from a rough draft, to proof reading, and on to publication preparation.

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[1]Michael Flanigan, "Children Make Their Own Books: Real Respect for Children's Writing," Indiana Reading Quarterly, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Fall, 1971), 5-7.

Rough Draft. As teachers-inservice or teachers-preservice know, the best stories that children write for themselves and their classmates grow out of their own experiences, fantasies and interests. Stimulating discussion, including random "brain storming," can bring experiences into the open, fantasies out of hiding, and interests to the surface. Once ideas begin to "fly," they can be guided into focus by jotting them on the chalkboard for a small group or on slips of paper for individuals. The pupils can then decide what ideas best suit the writing they plan to do.

After stimulating guided discussion, pupils are usually eager to write. They write rough drafts of their stories on lined tablet paper appropriate for the grade. The teacher gives them unknown words they may need, or they turn to their own file box "word banks" or to one of several dictionaries which differ in format and difficulty level.

Other suggestions children may wish to follow are:

.....Leave a space for the unknown word and keep on writing.

.....Write as much of the word beginning as possible.

.....Write the probable spelling on an extra slip of paper. If it looks correct, use it.

.....Keep a piece of paper at hand so that the teacher can quickly write down a requested word.

.....Think the story through before beginning to write, then ask the teacher to list the hard words on the chalkboard, or on a piece of paper.[2]

The references made to unknown words and what to do about them apply to spelling as well as to meaning. Children should not worry, however, too much about spelling at this point in their authorship. A flow of ideas and the spontaneous expression of them on paper are desired in the rough draft segment of the process.

In addition to discussion, other motivators for writing can be an Idea Box, a Picture File, or a sack of articles to be used as a Grab Bag. Children who are "stuck" for an idea may find among these a trigger for several writing possibilities.[3]

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[2]Mattie Miller, "Young Authors Project Encourages Writing and Reading," Indiana Reading Quarterly, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Winter, 1972), 10-11.

[3]Ibid.

Proof Reading. Pairs of children often read their stories to each other and make corrections as they look on the copy together. In the intermediate grades, a volunteer or chosen panel of students can function as proof readers.

Proof readers may find rereading the material several times an advantage if they read each time with a different purpose in mind such as:

Proof Reading 1 - Reading for sentence sense
Proof Reading 2 - Reading for misspelled words
Proof Reading 3 - Reading for punctuation
Proof Reading 4 - Reading for capitalization
Proof Reading 5 - Reading for paragraph sense
Proof Reading 6 - Checking on title, margins, etc.4

A simple reference chart of a few proof-reading symbols can function as a further aid to identify types of mechanical writing problems. The following list includes those symbols frequently used by elementary school children:

¶ Paragraph needed	ⓒ Comma unnecessary
NO ¶ No paragraph needed	,/ Comma needed
sp Spelling error	./ Period needed
∧ Insertion of word, phrase	,̓ Apostrophe needed
\ Cross out of unnecessary word	"/ Quotation marks needed
S Incomplete sentence	/// Capital letter needed
[ ] Combine short sentences; or, break a long sentence	NO /// Small letter needed

Pupils even in the primary grades can be shown how to code proof-reading symbols related to capital letters, punctuation, word insertions, spelling, paragraphs, and cross-out of unnecessary words. They take pride in this knowledge and in the proper use of it. A final copy of the work is written when corrections have been made.

Publication Preparation. Each child prepares the final copy of his or her own story for publication. The stories are written in either manuscript or cursive form directly on unlined book page paper. A heavily lined sheet of paper slipped under the paper to be written upon becomes a useful guide for keeping the writing line straight.

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[4]Paul Anderson, Language Skills in Elementary Education (New York: Macmillan, 1964), pp. 345-47.

Some children in every class may need to dictate stories and have them handwritten or typed. This special requirement should not keep them from authorship. They should not be made uncomfortable because a handwriting problem or a spelling problem causes creative writing to be an embarrassment instead of a pleasure. They feel emotions, they catch sensory impressions, they can think, and they can give verbal expression to their thoughts.

In some schools, the typing of all children's stories is a routine matter. As recently as the mid-1960's, one school had two typists working out of the elementary reading coordinator's office. These "secretaries" for the children were available to the classroom teacher at his or her convenience. Upon being scheduled into a classroom, the typists rolled over their typewriter stands and either typed as the children dictated their stories or typed the children's final copy on to book pages for them.[5] Now, in the 1970's, with teacher aides so prevalent in schools, an entire class can be easily accommodated.

Books of pupil writing should not be considered complete without a title page, illustrations, and perhaps a table of contents. A title page sample follows:

Title

Author

Illustrated
by

or

Pictures
by

(Copyright)
Room 11
Shiawassee School
Farmington, Michigan

Plans are made for a publication day when the rough draft, proof reading and publication preparation have been finished.

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[5]Harry Hahn, Consultant to Title I Project, Farmington, Michigan, 1965-66.

What will happen
on PUBLICATION DAY?

There are several ways to make books and bind them in the elementary classroom. Children's stories, poems or plays, jokes or riddles can be made and bound, for example:

1. by using contact paper over strong cardboard
2. by using snap and ring binders
3. by stapling pages between colored cardboard and then running matching or contrasting tape down the stapled edge.

These book making methods are useful, but none is as practical and professional looking or as permanent as the cloth bound book we want to introduce to you and show you how to make today.[6] Many creative writing efforts of children deserve a durable binding that permits this special brand of literature to circulate and to be read by many children.

Before going ahead with the publishing aspect, the materials needed must be reviewed, the book making procedure clarified, and the cost of separate books calculated.[7]

Materials Needed

1. Paper for book pages (8½ x 11)
2. Dry mounting tissue (11 x 14)
3. Cardboard (6 x 9)
4. Yard goods (1 yard makes 6 books)
   Often brought from home by pupils.
5. Darning needle
6. Stout thread, twine, or yarn
7. Electric hand iron, tacking iron, or, dry mounting press
8. Scissors
9. Thimble

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[6]Flanigan, op. cit.

[7]Participants at the session were presented with an informational handout on materials and procedures and shown a video tape of book making prepared by Miss Lucy Skelton, a doctoral candidate.

Children usually bring most of these materials into the classroom from home. They are easily found around the house. Even young primary age children can bring electric hand irons from home and learn to use them carefully.

Making the Book

1. Decide on number of pages to be folded in half.
   a. 2 blank pages (1 in front to be pressed down; 1 in back to be pressed down)
   b. Title page
   c. Table of Contents (optional)
   d. Construction paper for drawings or pictures

2. Fold pages in half.

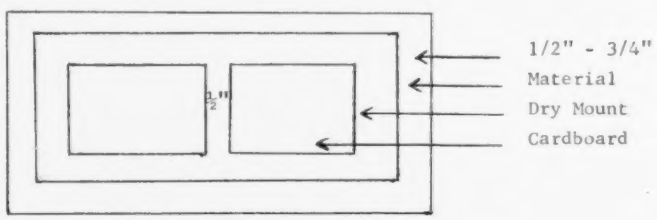
*3. Make holes with darning needle along crease in fold 1/2 to 3/4 inch apart.

4. Thread darning needle using double thread three times the length of book pages (use single thread if twine).

5. Back stitch from top to bottom, making a solid stitched line.
   a. Up first hole with needle and thread
   b. Down second hole
   c. Back up first hole, down third hole, etc.
   d. Scotch tape top and bottom ends after stitching is done.

* (Long art staple saves time. Results as good.)

Diagram



6. Choose yard goods.
   a. Cut 1/2 to 3/4" beyond dry mounting tissue.
   b. Put dry mount on material.
   c. Place cardboard on dry mount. Leave 1/2" space at center.

7. Fold over corners, one at a time--press with iron.
   Fold down top side, press; fold over left side, press; fold over right side, press; fold up bottom side, press.

8. Place book pages flat on second dry mount sheet.
   Cut dry mount to fit book pages.

9. Place over cardboard and material.

10. Press blank front sheet of paper with hot iron 5-6 seconds against second dry mount sheet. Press blank back sheet of paper with hot iron.

Voila! Le livre!

It has been found that materials are more easily handled and readily dispensed if stations are arranged around the room. In the primary grades or the lower levels of an open concept school, teacher aides or intermediate age students can assist the teacher with young pupils. In the upper grades or levels, committees can man the stations. There can be a Paper Station to issue dry mounting tissue, construction paper for illustrations, and cardboard; a Yard Goods station where yardage that appeals to both boys and girls can be selected (boys seem to prefer felt, burlap, loud plaids or wild stripes, while girls tend to like animal prints, birds, or flowers in less vibrant colors), a Sewing Station where darning needles, thread, scissors and thimbles are on hand, and last an Ironing Station where three to six electric or tacking irons, or a dry mounting press are arranged. The stations can be numbered and small groups designated to move from station-to-station one group at a time to avoid confusion.

When the routine has been established and book making begun, pupil groups form naturally in terms of their expertise. Some manage paper handling faster than others. Some sew quite skillfully. Some iron the fabric and paper on dry mounting tissue with a minimum of time and difficulty. Other children require considerable time for each part of the procedure. The author noted this to be true of students at the college level of the junior year when she introduced this book making technique to language arts classes. Variations among elementary school children in terms of their capabilities should be expected to be more pronounced. One way to ensure enthusiasm for book making and maintain the motivational spark is to set aside a large block of continuous time for it. In this way, annoying interruptions cannot interfere with the completion of various tasks only to dilute the positive effects of the enterprise. Specific time allotments will be different in different situations. The teacher or the teaching team will need to determine what is realistic.

Cost in money as well as in time must be considered. The cost per individual book runs about 25 cents. This amount covers the supplies children do not bring from home. The dry mounting tissue is the most expensive item. The costs quoted in the price list below are approximate, since costs vary

in accord with locality. The dry mounting paper, tacking irons, and dry mounting presses can all be found where visual education materials are sold, or photo dealers carry them.

PRICE LIST

Dry Mounting Tissue

sheet size	25 sheet pdkg.	100 sheet box	150 sheet box	500 sheet box
5 x 7	$ .40	$1.60	$2.25	$7.25
8 x 10	.85	3.30	4.75	15.25
8½ x 11	.95	4.00	5.80	18.50
11 x 14	1.60	6.25	9.05	28.65
16 x 20	3.25	13.00	18.70	59.50

Tacking Irons

Standard Model, polished base	9.95
Deluxe Model, free-slipping surface	10.95

Dry Mounting Presses

Junior 60, automatic thermostat	92.00
Standard 120, automatic adjustable thermostat	178.00

Expensive equipment is not essential to have an exciting experience develop. Particularly not if only one or two classes are book making at the same time. However, if a whole school begins to consider pupil writing and the literature produced and bound by students as an integral part of the overall reading program, then dry mounting tissue as well as book page paper would be purchased in quantity and perhaps a dry mounting press would be needed for every room or work area. School personnel who have embarked with pupils on the adventure of book making testify that it is singularly worthwhile, improving overtime as a motivator for both pupil writing and pupil reading.

Where can we put
a BOOK NOOK?

Books made by budding authors in any grade or at any level usually turn out to be interesting or beautiful or clever. They need to be honored

by having a place set aside for them in the classroom. How can a special place be made? What shall be put in it?

An easily assembled paper chain Book Nook can be one answer. The pupils can make it themselves. Chains are made by linking multicolored construction strips 1 x 8 inches long with ends taped together. When these are attached to the ceiling, they give the illusion of a boundary yet not of an enclosure. The Book Nook remains open, accessible and visible. Who is in it as well as what is in it can be an important inducement for reading! The Nook can be round, oval, square, or oblong and as small or as large as available space will permit. It need not be the only reading corner!

What shall be put in this Book Nook? The teacher and pupils have a unique chance to arrange a pleasant learning environment. A rug, pillows, low table, book shelf and perhaps a lamp are a few of the furnishings that can be found around the teacher's home or donated by pupils. Somehow, lying on a rug to read or sitting on the floor on a pillow to do it seems very attractive to children--so, if we want to promote the reading of their own literature, why not let them lie on a rug or sit on pillows?

The book samples on the table are from Shiawassee Elementary School in Farmington, Michigan. A Reading Coordinator friend loaned them for this presentation. Schools have been mentioned in which the literature pupils write is a staple in the reading program. Shiawassee School is one of them, thanks to the work of my friend Mrs. Daisy Barbour, the insightfulness of the principal Mr. Ronald Jackson, and the inspiration of Dr. Harry Hahn. Take time to look at some of these books. Two or more from each elementary grade were pulled from the school library Authors' Shelf. Notice that each book has its own library card and can circulate among all of the pupils in the school.

Book making need not be confined to a single classroom or to a single school as the Young Authors Project at Evansville, Indiana, proves. This project has been successfully going on since 1969 in the Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation. Many classroom teachers and reading teachers have been involved with the students in the effort. The evaluative criteria for the project state that the program is successful "if at least three books per 100 students enrolled in grades one through eight are bound and placed in the library and if there is an observable interest in reading books written by peers". According to reading teacher Mattie Miller, these criteria continue to be well met.[8]

What are some of the RESULTS
when budding authors have made
their own books?

At least eight results can be listed as outcomes of authorship on

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[8]Miller, op. cit.

the part of elementary school children:

1. The stimulation for reading and linguistic exchanges among the authors about their works. This activity benefits the low-power reader more than anyone.

2. The growth of vocabularies through discoveries of new, wonderful, unusual words with their attendant new, wonderful, unusual meanings that the authors have made along the way.

3. A greater respect for and care of commercially published books used in schools. This attitude is particularly necessary when paperbacks are flooding the publishing field as they are today.

4. A knowledge about book size, shape, weight, kinds of paper used, sizes of print, format and illustration.

5. An eagerness for book ownership to the extent that the building of a personal library often begins.

6. A desire to collect a classroom library of budding author books to exchange among classmates.

7. A shelf of budding author works in the school library for circulation throughout the school.

8. An authors' annual book fair which is of value not only to school children and school people but to parents as well.

Aside from Pupil Writing, Publication Day, and preparing a Book Nook, the eight points given above may have impact at length upon the community. Among the budding authors may be the news reporters, journalists, essayists, medical or scientific writers, poets, playwrights and novelists of tomorrow. Teacher respect for pupil writing may result in the eventual full flowering of authorship and bear fruit in productive, constructive careers.

As soon as you can, practice book making yourself and then get together with some budding authors for a splendid time. For children do read, and seem to learn how quite painlessly, when they read their own literature.

CREATIVE DRAMATICS IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

Harriet W. Ehrlich

(The material reproduced here was presented by Mrs. Ehrlich to the conference participants. Her address involved audience participation based on the ideas contained in the material which follows.)

"Great art flourishes from encouragement."--Mansfield

ATMOSPHERE

There must be a warm, friendly atmosphere so that the student feels free to express himself. Creativity takes place when everyone is interacting freely, accepting and being accepted. But creativity cannot grow in chaos. Children want reasonable limits. It is important to explain the nature of acting. It only works if participant pretends every minute he is "on stage" (or in magic circle). Children are aware of what would happen in the middle of a very sad scene they are watching on television if there is inappropriate laughter. When this is discussed with them they say it messes the scene. So it will with your scenes. Some teachers establish group rules immediately; others, as the need arises. Often children establish their own rules. A magic whistle or a magic word is a fine signal for silence. When establishing this atmosphere conducive to creativity, keep in mind that you are not setting limits because you cherish discipline. Rather you are establishing an atmosphere of mutual respect--a climate that nurtures creativity and allows children the opportunity to express as Coleridge said,

"What nature gave me at my birth
The Shaping Spirit of my imagination."

Some points to remember:

a. Encourage freedom within reasonable limits.

b. Independent thinking is more important than "correct" answers. (In Creative Dramatics there are no right or wrong answers where emotions are involved.) Provide many opportunities for children to make decisions.

c. Start working with group until children are comfortable. Do not insist that a reticent child must participate but invite him to join in when he is ready.

d. Games help group relax and interact. (See Games)

e. Name tags (for first session) and a warm greeting at beginning and end of each session makes each child feel his identity and worth. (This, of course, applies to after school groups.)

SEQUENCE

Creative Dramatics is an art. It fails when the leader does not provide the children with an opportunity to master dramatic techniques. Preschool children are apt to be able to pantomime a simple story, but generally speaking, it is best to follow a definite sequence move from one stage to the next as the children gain mastery.

a. Pantomime - Ask class how many things they "say without words." Discuss how our actions communicate our feeling. Encourage children to be aware of non-verbal communication.

b. Simple physical actions using the five senses. (See Sense Memory)

c. Improvisations involving feeling - conflict. (See Emotions)

d. Characterization. (See Characterization)

e. Dialogue. (See Dialogue)

f. Story Dramatization. (See Story Dramatization)

PREPARATION

Careful preparation, dramatically presented, is most important. Flexibility is also essential. No lesson plan is more important than spontaneous material that is instigated by the children.

Learn to listen to the children--encourage exchange of ideas. (See Lesson Plan)

CHOICE OF MATERIAL

Know your group--its interest and background. Let this guide your choice of material. However, as Sybil Marshall says, "I believe in the theory of education which states that one should start from what the children know but my whole teacher's being rebels against the children of a depressed mining area learning about coal mining....Children begin or are where their creative imagination take them as much as where dreary facts take them."[1]

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[1]Sybil Marshall, Adventure in Creative Education (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1968), p. 191.

Choose stories you like so that you can present them with warmth and understanding. Avoid the moralistic or banal. Realistic, but high expectations are important and challenging. Story materials to dramatize do not have to be on the children's reading level. Aesop's Fables and Nursery Rhymes are fun for all ages. (See Bibliography)

SELF DISCIPLINE

Control from Within

It is important that children working with Creative Dramatics experience success and satisfaction. They also receive recognition from their peers and the leader. Thus, it is an ego-strengthening activity. Surely, it is easier to behave when one has a good feeling about oneself. A good teacher can, with honesty, find the strengths of every child and share this with him. When children work in groups to create an improvisation, each individual is involved as a "team member" and cooperative work brings tangible results. The child is working to please himself and his peers. Satisfaction from socially acceptable behavior along with the pleasure of creative dramatic activities encourages the child to want to achieve self-control.

Respect for One's Peers

Respect for one's peers should be encouraged by recognizing each child's worth. Positive, constructive evaluation of scenes makes the participant aware of his and his peer's worth. The leader should consistently discuss emotions. It is impossible to create a role unless one is aware of feelings. Through drama the children are encouraged to become aware of their own and other people's feelings.

Small groups (4-6 children) are a very important activity to help children solve problems, make decisions, interact and taste the success which comes from inner control. If a group has been unable to work together to create a scene, this provides an opportunity to discuss the reason the group could not work together. To ask children to try to find solutions.

HOMEWORK

Give children "homework," some assignment to carry out until the next session. The assignment can be as simple as watching people touch various objects, observing how you move when you are angry, thinking about the character you want to play in the story that is being dramatized. Throw out a question to encourage "research" and ask them to find the answer for "next time." An example a leader used was, "Where did the Pilgrims get the orange you said they had in the first Thanksgiving feast we acted today?" (It's very easy to say, "Don't be silly, oranges don't grow in Massachusetts.") A Creative Dramatics leader encourages children to learn how to find information.

All groups enjoy drawing pictures about the story they are dramatizing. When working with poetry, encourage the children to write their own poems. Do NOT give time-consuming assignments after every session.

MOTIVATION

A leader motivates the children with enthusiasm. She uses her own imagination to arouse curiosities and set a mood. The teacher's participation helps stimulate, motivate and reinforce group feeling.

CLARITY

Be enthusiastic and clear in giving assignments. Review materials which were tried previously. Never begin an exercise until everyone understands the assignment.

CONCENTRATION AND TRUTHFULNESS

Whatever happens on stage happens for a reason. One must know Who, Where, When, and What. Ask the children to make a picture of the scene in their minds. They should try to think the thoughts they would be thinking in the scene. Thoughts and feelings make our bodies move. Do not allow a child to continue any scene unless he is "in character." A play area is set up; the rule of the game is to pretend every minute.

VARIETY

Vary lessons with relaxing exercises, rhythms, exercises in sense memory. Use various techniques, such as (1) phrases, (2) props, (3) magic ball that grants wishes to stimulate improvisations and help develop imagination. Use hand puppets and games. (See Suggested List)

EVALUATION

Follow each exercise with an evaluation period. The teacher sets the tone of group discussion and helps children learn constructive criticism. The teacher's positive attitude acts as a model. Begin with "What did you see that you believed?" The children soon learn to stress the positive. "What can we do to improve the scene?" comes next. It is good technique to use the character's name rather than the child's when evaluating. "THE KING or THE BEAR didn't really get angry enough." Ask such questions as

Did we understand the action? Did everyone stay in character?
Did we solve the problem?

ALLIED ARTS

Be aware of interrelatedness of allied arts. Rhythm, music, art and poetry. (See Bibliography)

School District of Philadelphia

CREATIVE DRAMATICS

GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Academic achievement
More interaction
Remedy skill deficiencies
Increased vocabularies
Number of stories, poems child knows or has heard

ACADEMIC - Child as total being: emotional, social, intellectual

Provide situations that allow child to expand verbal and cognitive capacities so that vocabularies grow and independent thinking is encouraged. Broaden total classroom communication.

Encourage thinking, verbalizing, reading.

Motivate Reading - Raise questions and capitalize on children's innate curiosity. Encourage research. Through dramatization, arouse interest in literature, poetry, history, etc. Expose children to good books; arouse interest by story telling and reading.

Encourage Body Movement - Nonverbal communication which reinforces oral communication. "Nonverbal expression can provide the best pathway to speech development."[2]

Teach Word Analysis and Study Skills through dramatic activities.

Use Dramatic Activities to make social studies and Black History more meaningful.

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[2]James Moffett, A Student Centered Language Arts Curriculum, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

High involvement Interest level high Ability to listen Enthusiasm	ATTENTION AND CONCENTRATION - Interaction encourages concentration and attention. Learning by involvement and getting feedback. Motivate children and arouse enthusiasm so that they become involved in learning. If material is relevant and satisfies children's interest and concerns, then attention and concentration should follow.
Better self image Less discipline problems Children volunteer freely Less fighting More positive attitude toward school	SOCIAL GROWTH - Opportunity to work cooperatively with other children. Develop self-discipline. Receive peer recognition. Taste success (ego strengthening) in order to provide child with a positive school experience. Help child learn to defer (taking turns). Encourage child to be aware of and accept differences. Provide opportunity for pupil to gain insight into his own feelings and allow him to express strong feelings in a controlled environment (discussion and dramatization). To develop greater awareness of himself and others.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Problem solving Awareness of alternatives Imaginative (creative) thinking	PROBLEM SOLVING - "Manipulative and exploratory experience."[3] Opportunity to classify, categorize and chance for inductive thinking. Child should be encouraged to question and explore new ideas. Stimulate imagination (creativity) by giving pupils opportunity to use creative dramatics when techniques involve using imaginations and finding ways to solve problems set forth in story or improvisation. Use role playing to show there are alternatives. Encourage children to find answers for themselves. "Assess a situation "Set a goal "Develop strategy for achieving goal "Implement plan"[4]
Cultural enrichment What poems? What music?	EXPOSURE TO ALLIED ARTS - Music, poetry, art. To broaden horizons.

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[3]Ibid.

[4]Description of the program of the Pennsylvania Advancement School.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Observe which senses used most often
Increase in descriptive vocabulary due to sensory awareness

SENSE AWARENESS - "There is nothing in the intellect which is not first in the senses."[5] This includes sound discrimination, heightening visual awareness, sense of feeling and verbalization of touch sensations, etc.

Test teacher's attitude before C.D. course and after
Observe a good C.D. teacher. Note any difference in children's attitude toward classroom and teacher
Observe general atmosphere in classroom
Ask mature teachers if they have changes because of C.D. How?

TRAINED TEACHERS who -
Show acceptance and respect for children both verbally and nonverbally. Set realistic limits.
Capitalize on children's strengths.
Provide evaluation period and encourage open end discussions.
Establish classrooms where there is an atmosphere of child involvement. She uses relevant materials so that children are motivated.
Encourage children to find answers for themselves.
Plan lessons well. Uses imaginative materials, follow through and provides feedback.
Are concerned with their own continuous growth and use allied arts.
Have good discussion techniques and can accept children's ideas.
Provide atmosphere of trust.
Are interested in the total child--social, intellectual and emotional growth. This might be called student oriented class.
Have high standards which challenge pupils but have sensitivity enough to accept each child's contribution based on child's ability.
Use Creative Dramatics to produce their own new teaching techniques.

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[5]Ancient saying translated from the Latin.

DEFINITIONS

DRAMATIC PLAY

"To play it out is the most natural auto-therapeutic measure childhood affords."[6]

"Make believe" - pretending - imaginative play - play it out - Winifred Ward calls it "trying on life."
"In addition to its general utility in relieving tensions and externalizing inner experiences it helps the child set boundaries between reality and unreality."[7]
"A means by which the child works out his difficulties for himself so that he may meet the challenge of his world with confidence. He also uses it to make up for defeats, suffering and frustration."
- - -"In play activities the child is engaged not in self expression only but also, and this is most significant, on self discovery exploring and experimenting with sensations, movements, and relationships through which he gets to know himself and form his own concepts of the world."

CREATIVE DRAMATICS

"Is an inclusive expression designating all forms of improvised drama: dramatic play, story dramatization, impromptu work in pantomime, shadow and puppet plays, and all other extemporaneous drama. It is the activity in which informal drama is created by the players themselves."[8]
Creative Dramatics is an immediate experience for the child - he supplies his own thoughts, words, feelings and actions. It is lead by a trained, sensitive leader. It is a group experience. Drama means doing.

PANTOMIME

Acting without words. Expressing feelings, thoughts through use of the body without speech.

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[6]Eric Erickson, "Studies in the Interpretation of Play," Genetic Psychology Monographs, 22 (1940), 561.

[7]Frank Hartley, Understanding Children's Play (New York: Columbia University Press).

[8]Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children (New York: Appleton Century, 1957).

IMPROVISATION

Dictionary says it is "an impromptu invention; something done off hand." In Creative Dramatics it is a scene which is planned in advance (who, where) but action and dialogue are left up to players.

ROLE PLAYING

Role Playing is a part of Socio-drama in which a life problem is acted out. It gives the child an opportunity, by reversing roles to find alternatives to various life situations.

RHYTHM

A more or less regular reoccurrence of emphasis (heartbeat). Used in Creative Dramatics to describe many simple activities, such as, responses to music, poetry or physical acts.

Example - Milk Man's Horse (see poetry)
Playground activities, running, jumping

STAYING IN CHARACTER

Concentrating and pretending every minute.

SIDE COACHING

An assist given by teacher-director to the student-actor during the solving of a problem to help him keep focus.[9]

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[9]Viola Spolin, Improvisation for the Theatre (Evanston, IU., Northwestern University Press, 1963).

SENSE MEMORY

"There is nothing in the intellect which was not first in the senses."[10]

INTRODUCTION TO FIVE SENSES

Teacher: "How do you know what goes on in the world? How do you know I am here in this room?"

Child: "We can see you."

Teacher: "Close your eyes." (make some noise, continue to talk) "How do you know I'm still here?"

Child: "We can hear you."

Teacher: "You go home today, you go into the house and you can't see it or hear it but you know there's a cake in the oven. How do you know it?"

Child: "I can smell it."

Teacher: "Good! Now it is dark and you can't see the cake but you take a bite and it is chocolate. How do you know?"

Child: "I can taste it."

Teacher: "Suppose you tried to eat it and it was so hot you couldn't hold it - how would you know that it's hot?"

Child: "I could feel it."

Teacher: "Now - we know that we have five senses - we can see, hear, smell, taste and feel."

For young children - pictures can go up on the board.

We see with----------eyes
We hear with----------ears
We taste with----------mouth
We smell with----------nose
We feel with----------?
Answer is likely to be hands.

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[10]Ancient axiom: "Nihil est un intellecta quod pruis non ferit in sensa."

Teacher: "Yes we feel with our hands." (I then step on a toe and ask --)
"Did you feel <u>that</u> with your hands - or if I tickle you - do you feel that with your hands? No. If you go outside on a very cold day - are your hands the only part of you that feel cold?"
"What part of you feels the cold? We feel with-------?"

Child: "We feel with our whole body."

<u>SUGGESTIONS</u> - For older children

Discuss Creative Dramatics. Write the two words on the board and ask what "create" means. What is the difference between the word "make" and "create?" We "make" a bed or cup of tea. What sort of things do we "create"? Drama comes from the Greek and means "action." If you use T.V. language they understand. Coming next week an exciting drama.

SENSE MEMORY

FEEL

MOTIVATION

A table with various objects on it which children can feel.

Categories and Classification

<u>Smooth</u>	<u>Rough</u>
a sheet of paper	sand paper
a pane of glass	a jagged rock
<u>Soft</u>	<u>Hard</u>
fur	piece of metal
cotton ball	rock
marshmallow	sourball

What is hot - what is cold, etc., etc.

SAMPLE IMPROVISATION

When: It's a hot Sunday in August.
Who: You are all dressed up ready to go visiting, your mother isn't ready.
What: You get a piece of ice and use it to make yourself more comfortable.

Questions to ask:

1. What is ice? Accept water, but point out that if you turn on the faucet, you don't get ice. Accept all partial answers until you get ice is frozen water.

2. What happens to ice when I hold it in my hand?

3. Why does it melt?

4. What do I have to be careful of in this scene? What are you wearing? What day is it?

5. Have you decided how to use the ice to make you feel cooler?

Where: The ice is in a dish in front of you. You are at the kitchen table. Draw your "concentration box" - start pretending when I say BEGIN.

It is often helpful to coach - or focus attention - "Careful don't get that good dress wet" - "Gee, this ice feels good," etc. At conclusion, praise and evaluate.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES FOR SENSE OR TOUCH - Whole class.

1. Hold a kitten.
2. Light a match and burn your finger.
3. Test some water - it's very, very hot.
4. Make a snowball with your bare hands.
5. Try on a pair of shoes that are too small.
6. Wear a sweater that is itchy.
7. Pick up a turtle.
8. A rose with thorns.
9. A delicate vase.
10. You have three things on your desk. (a) a piece of construction paper, (b) a picture, (c) a container of sticky stuff. What sort of sticky stuff will you use to make your picture stick to paper? Have children describe what they will use - paste, glue, rubber cement and what sort of container they will be using. How does it open? (Spatial Concepts) What must you be careful of in this scene? What other senses beside touch will you be using? After the picture is in place - evaluate - ask - how do your hands feel?
11. Wash hands. - (Stress Sequence)

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES FOR SENSE OF FEEL - Smaller groups (6-10)

Be sure to establish - <u>WHO</u>, <u>WHERE</u>, <u>WHAT</u>

1. Walk on hot sand.
2. Walk on rocks and pebbles in your bare feet.

3. Walk across a stream on a fallen tree trunk.
4. Walk a tight rope.
5. Walk in shoes that hurt.
6. Walk in soft grass in your bare feet.

ACTIVITIES

Read "With Your Fingers"[11] or "Objects Behind your Back."[12]
A child puts his hands in back of himself and the teacher places a common object in his hands. The child feels it (make sure he knows what it is). The child then describes it without saying what it is used for. He should tell its size, shape, texture, etc. The class guesses what it is he is holding.

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[11]Viola Spolin, op.cit., p. 56.

[12]Ibid.

TECHNIQUES

EMOTIONS

"The school must consider the emotional concerns of its pupils and help them work with those concerns. In this way, emotional and social concerns can become the core around which the curriculum is organized."[13]

MOTIVATION

Teacher: "What do I mean when I say, you hurt my feelings? Where did you hurt me? I don't mean you stepped on my toe. Where did you hurt me?"

Children: Respond ("inside" - "in your heart" are typical answers).

Teacher: "What emotions or feelings do we all have?"

Children: "Good feelings and bad feelings. Happy or sad."

Teacher: (accepts answer) "But you feel bad if you lost a nickel, or if your mother is very sick, or if somebody takes your toy, or if someone breaks a promise to you. Let's list some other words that tell how we feel."

CLASSIFY

Record on Chalkboard

lonely	disappointed	surprised
proud	angry	gay
jealous	worried	silly

SUGGESTION

If young children cannot name enough emotions, it is helpful to give a situation and ask them how would you feel if - "your brother broke your bike?"

It is important to recognize children's feelings. Feelings are not "good" or "bad"; it's how they are handled that is important. It is important for children to be aware of this. This sort of discussion of feelings and how we handle them gives you as well as the child insights into themselves and others.

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[13]Mario Fantani and Gerald Weinstein, The Disadvantaged (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 364.

SAMPLE IMPROVISATION - (6-12 children)

WHERE - Classroom.

WHEN - End of school day. Dismissal bell starts improvisation.

WHO - You.

WHAT - Take report card. Go out school door. Read report card. Walk home.

First Playing - It is a terrible report. Walk home.
Second Playing- (done immediately without discussion of first playing) It is a wonderful report. Walk home.

Discuss and Evaluate

What was the difference between the first and second improvisation? What made the difference? Discuss until children are aware that The Way We Feel changes the way we move and look.

ADDITIONAL IMPROVISATIONS FOR EMOTIONS

1. Close the door

a. You are very angry.
b. When you have just said good-bye to your family (lonely).
c. When you sneak in late (scared).
d. When you have just gotten the baby to sleep.
e. When you rush in with good news.

CHANGE OF MOOD

Ask children if they ever change from one feeling to another. Let them tell you. Examples: Open a birthday gift; you are sure it's that blue pullover you have been wanting. It is not; it is a horrid sweater. - Get up Saturday morning expecting to go to a picnic and lift the shade. It's pouring rain. - You are dressing to go out. The phone rings. Your friend tells you she is sick and will not have her party.

1. "Waterhole" - Based on Death Valley Suite, Grofe[14] (older children)
Motivation - A picture of a "forty-niner." Discuss what sort

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[14] Adventures in Music, Grade 4, Vol. 1, RCA Victor LE 1004.

of lands people had to cross to get to California. Discuss desert, mirage, oasis.

Play record and ask children to try to picture what might be happening as a group of people cross wasteland. Ask children to raise hands each time "something new" happens or when there is a change of mood. (Record on board)

a. They are hot and thirsty. They have left their wagon train to look for water on foot.

b. Someone sees water. (Excitement starts)

c. They all run to oasis and "use" water. (Their lives are saved)

d. They are thankful. (Bell)

e. They celebrate - dance, - men go get horses to water them.

Suggestions:

1. Set scene. Use two large pieces of blue construction paper for oasis.

2. Decide on WHO - assign one leader to see the water first. Everyone must know who he is.

3. Discuss senses - Feel - heat of sun, sand, mouths dry, sweat.
   See - sunlight brilliant.

4. Discuss change of moods.

5. Play; evaluate; replay with new group.

CHANGE OF MOOD - Ice Cream Cone - (young children)

WHO - Child and friend, storekeeper, two big boys
WHERE - Street, store
WHAT - Child and friend go to store to buy ice cream cone. They leave store with cones. Two big boys run into them. They drop cones.

Suggestions:

a. Set scene.
b. Decide who they will be.
c. Which senses will they use?
d. When does mood change occur?
e. What will they do now?

ACTIVITIES

1. Pictures showing emotions may be used. What happened before and after. (See "Use of Pictures")

2. Phrases may be used - Group of three-five children make up scene based on phrases. (See phrases).
   e.g. You're not fair.
   That belongs to me!
   I'm sorry.
   You can't come to my party.
   I won't play with you.

3. Adverb game - "In the manner of the word"
   Send one person out of the room. The class decides on an adverb. The person is called back into the room. He then asks various members of the class to perform acts "in the manner of the word."
   Example: Group chose the adverb angrily -
   Person who is "it" asks one person at a time to -

   a. Walk like the word.
   b. Eat like the word.
   c. Sit like the word, etc.
   d. Pick up an object in the manner of.
   e. Shut the door in the manner of.

The "it" person tries to guess the adverb by observing the person acting. Record the words on chalkboard. Accept synonyms.

ROLE PLAYING

Suggestions:

The author feels that role playing can be therapeutic but it should not be therapy. Teachers should not try to be psychiatrists. Classroom role playing should help the child meet his own reality and become aware of alternatives. In other words, role playing can explore human relationship conflicts and feelings on an educative level. Leave the unconscious and neurotic conflicts to those trained to handle them.

Discussion of scenes is most important. Children have an opportunity to agree or disagree and offer more alternatives.

The accepting attitude of the teacher is vital. If you must moralize, approve or disapprove, do not try this technique. Its value lies in the children's own insights. Once you have used value judgment, the children will try to find the "right" solution in order to please you.

Uses:

To solve current problem or to see alternative solutions.
Example: Any situation in which there is conflict in which feelings are involved.

1. Children fighting.
2. Sharing on playground - taking turns.
3. Family scenes.
4. Cheating, stealing.
5. Pick up problems as they occur.

To prepare children for life problems they will meet.
Example:

1. Visit to doctor for shots.
2. Handling prejudice or discrimination.
3. Facing their feelings about something "not fair."
4. Job interviews.

Exchanging roles (reversal) allows child to think and feel as another person and gives him insight into others. He must face "both sides" of the conflict.

PROCEDURE[15]

1. Define the problems.
2. Gather facts and opinions.
3. Consider alternatives.
4. Test alternatives.

UNFINISHED STORIES

Tell a story (either original or published)[16] but do not finish it. Groups of children will make up and dramatize the ending.

THE PUBLIC INTERVIEW[17]

This is dramatic technique developed by the authors of Values and Teaching. A detailed explanation is given. I urge you to read entire book.

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[15] Learning About Role Playing - Association for Childhood Education, p. 33.

[16] Unfinished Stories for Use in the Classroom, NEA 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

[17] Louis Raths, (et.al.): Values in Teaching, Columbus, Ohio: Chas. Merrill & Co., 1966, p. 142.

CREATIVE DRAMATICS ACTIVITIES

Book Levels PP-5

ACTIONS WORDS DEVELOPED BY PATRICIA GRASTY

PURPOSE:

To extend use and knowledge of "Doing Words" or Verbs.

PRESENTATION:

1. The teacher-leader says:
   "I am going to do something. Be ready to describe my action with one word."
   (i.e. - "eat" - teacher should specifically show what she is eating)
   "What was I doing? Can you tell what I may have been eating?"
   Have the children suggest other words that tell about one action you can do.
   (Record all responses on the chalkboard.)

2. "What do we call words that show action?" Search for responses that indicate "Action words" or "verbs."

THE ACTIVITY:

1. "In this activity you will have a card that suggests an action you can do. Think about how you can present it so we will know what you are doing."

2. One child at a time can show his word, choosing the next person to demonstrate.

VARIATIONS:

1. Pictures that show a specific action can be collected and mounted for use instead of word cards.

2. More than one card of a specific word might be distributed, so that several children can show their action at one time. (i.e. - dance - varied children may show tap, ballet, popular, etc.)

COMMENTS:

1. The teacher must be sensitive to the reading needs of her children so that the children, with confidence, request help with their own card, if necessary.

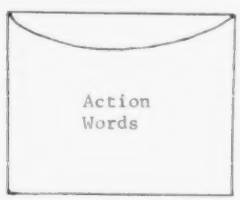
2. The Action Words game should be played for short sessions. The more often the game is played the more precise you can expect the children to be in their improvisations.

MATERIALS:

A starter set of word cards or pictures of Actions should be collected.

SUGGESTED ACTION WORDS:

1. kick
2. swim
3. jump
4. hop
5. skip
6. cry
7. swim
8. climb



9. fly
10. write
11. eat
12. paint
13. run
14. drink
15. tiptoe
16. stretch

Antonyms
(Opposites)

Book Levels
1-up
Developed by Patricia Crasty

PURPOSE:

To provide an opportunity to extend recognition of words that are opposites.

PRESENTATION:

"If I say 'boy' what word would you give that is opposite?"
(Continue until response of "girl" and, with several quick verbal sets like:)

"in"----------
"up"----------
"you"----------
"yes"----------

THE ACTIVITY:

"In this activity you will receive a card (word or picture) that indicates a word to demonstrate in any manner you develop. As the audience watches, someone with the word which is oppostie should immediately join to show his word."

From the audience, another participant describes both opposite words. (Responses should be recorded on the chalkboard.)

MATERIALS:

Lower and Upper Grades (pictures showing the meaning, with the word written, also)

1.	in	-	out
2.	stop	-	go
3.	big	-	little
4.	old	-	young
5.	wet	-	dry
6.	(girl	-	boy)
7.	up	-	down
8.	awake	-	asleep
9.	cold	-	hot
10.	cry	-	laugh
11.	new	-	old

Upper Grades

1.	buy	-	sell
2.	close	-	open
3.	hard	-	soft
4.	untie	-	tie
5.	idle	-	busy
6.	over	-	under
7.	sharp	-	dull
8.	fast	-	slow
9.	short	-	tall
10.	lose	-	find
11.	bumpy	-	smooth
12.	dirty	-	clean
13.	destroy	-	create, build, make
14.	goodbye	-	hello

Classification
Book Levels K-3
Variation: 2-Adult
Developed by Patricia Grasty

PURPOSE:

To provide an opportunity to develop Classification of familiar Toys, Animals, People, etc.

PRESENTATION:

1. "When I say 'Toys' can you name many different ones? What makes them all Toys?" (Continue until responses indicate an understanding of what a toy is.)
2. Continue with development of different "People" and "Animals," or other categories to be used.

THE ACTIVITY:

1. Varied cards are distributed. Children are instructed to plan to show who or what they are for the audience to guess.
2. As with other activities described before, it is necessary to keep the activity level high, and stop at that climax.

VARIATIONS:

Word cards can be prepared in several categories, for example: Food, Clothing, Transportation.

When the word, as presented through pantomime, is discovered it should be recorded on the chalkboard under the appropriate category.

MATERIALS:

1. A set of picture cards that clearly indicate the item. For example,

PEOPLE	TOYS	ANIMALS	
fairy	top	fish	pig
farmer	bat & ball	lion	bear
witch	jack in the box	rabbit	bird
policeman	doll	chicks	monkey
fireman	kite	kitten	doe
nurse	etc.	dog	
newsboy			
etc.			

2. A set of headings to be taped to the chalkboard or use on the felt board.
   i.e. PEOPLE ANIMALS TOYS

3. Other good words to be pantomimed:

WE EAT....	WE WEAR....	WE RIDE....
banana	hat	car
sandwich	boots	bike
ice cream	coat	roller skates
corn-on-cob	necktie	airplane
lollipop	belt	boat, etc.
etc.	apron, etc.	

suggested, if available:

TASTE

Magic Fruit Bowl - Divide the class into half participants and half audience; play once and reverse roles.

Teacher: - I have a magic fruit bowl. In it is every kind of fruit.
What is your favorite? (Record on chalkboard.)
I'm going to offer you a piece of fruit. By the way you hold it, prepare it (if it needs to be prepared) and the way you bite and chew it, the audience will know what sort of fruit you have chosen.
Can you tell me the different ways you might eat an orange?

Children: - Respond
1. Cut it in halves or quarters.
2. Squeeze the orange and drink the juice.
3. Peel the orange and eat the sections.
4. Make a hole in the orange and suck it.

Suggestion:

Explain that this is not a guessing game. The audience should not call out the answers. They are to watch someone to see if you really believe what he's doing and how you know which fruit he has selected.

Procedure:

#1 group will take a piece of fruit from the magic bowl on his desk when teacher says begin.
#2 group will watch. Stop pretending when teacher says end. Evaluate. Reverse groups.

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Ask Class:

What is fruit? This should be homework or independent research.

Word Recognition

TOSS THE BALL:

Adaptation of a game in Interplay by Bernard De Koven, published by Philadelphia Board of Education.

PURPOSE:

To provide an opportunity for word recognition and reinforce vocabulary.

PRESENTATION:

Give each child a card with a word on it and a large paper clip. Tell the child to clip it on himself. This is now his name.

THE ACTIVITY:

Children stand in a circle. They throw the ball to someone whose name card they can read. They call out the word before they toss the ball. If they should misread the word the catcher corrects them and states the correct word returning the ball to the thrower. The thrower then returns the ball using the correct word.

Example: Thrower calls out, "PEN"

Catcher says, "No, I am PIN" - he returns ball

Thrower - PIN - he throws ball to child with PIN on his card.

VARIATIONS:

Make "name cards."

Arithmetic problems	8 x 8
Shapes	0
Alphabet	A
Colors	------
Initial consonants	------
Blends	Cl

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Oak tag cards large enough to read and small enough for children to wear. Paper clips. Large ball.

SUGGESTED LIST:

The words or problems used depend on level of class and reading program used.

The following words are from BRL Series 1, Book 3.

clap	drop
clam	drum
crab	drip
crib	drag
crop	flag

The whole word or the blend may be written on the card.
Example:

clap or cl

If the blend is used the child who throws the ball must call out a word beginning with cl before he throws the ball to the cl wearer.

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